April 8, 1991

THE NEW YORKER

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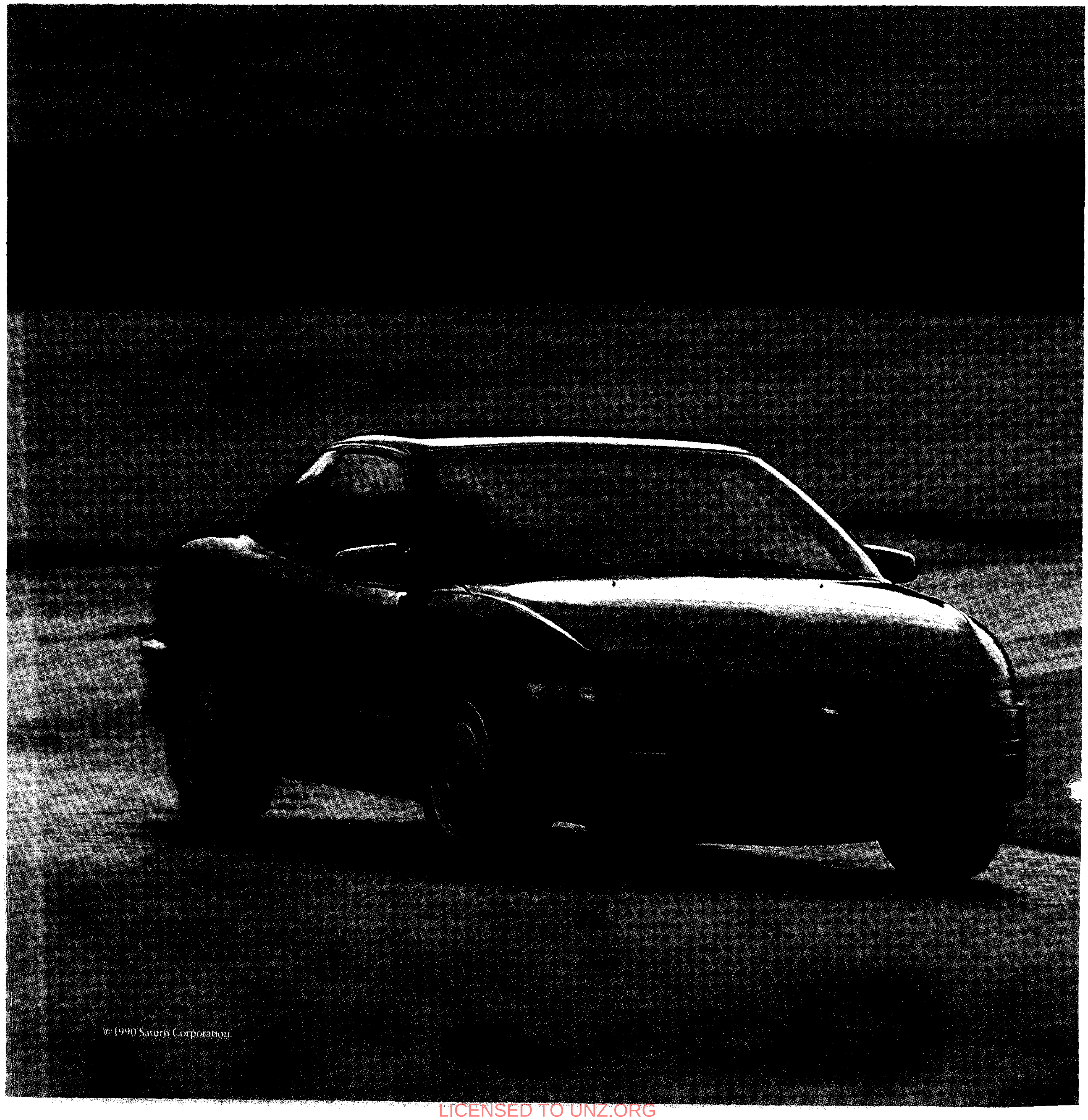

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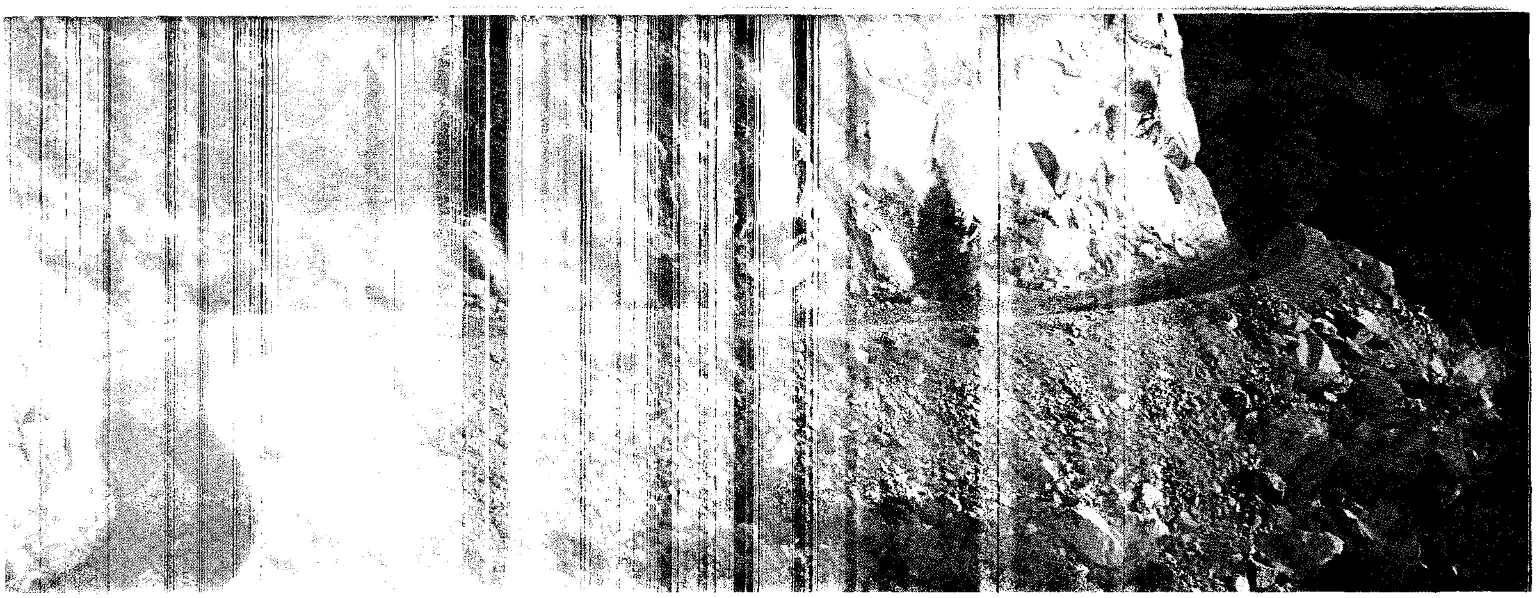

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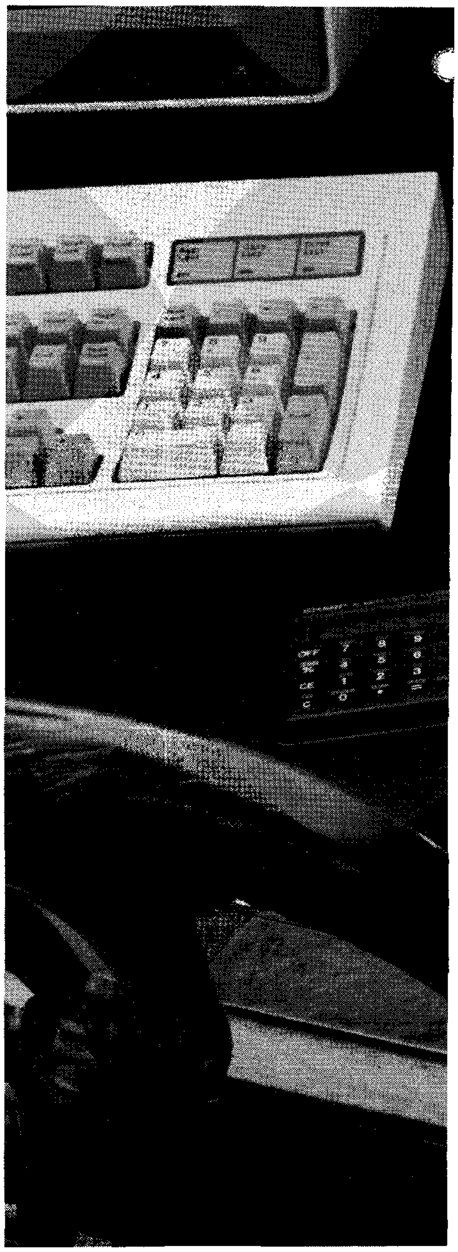

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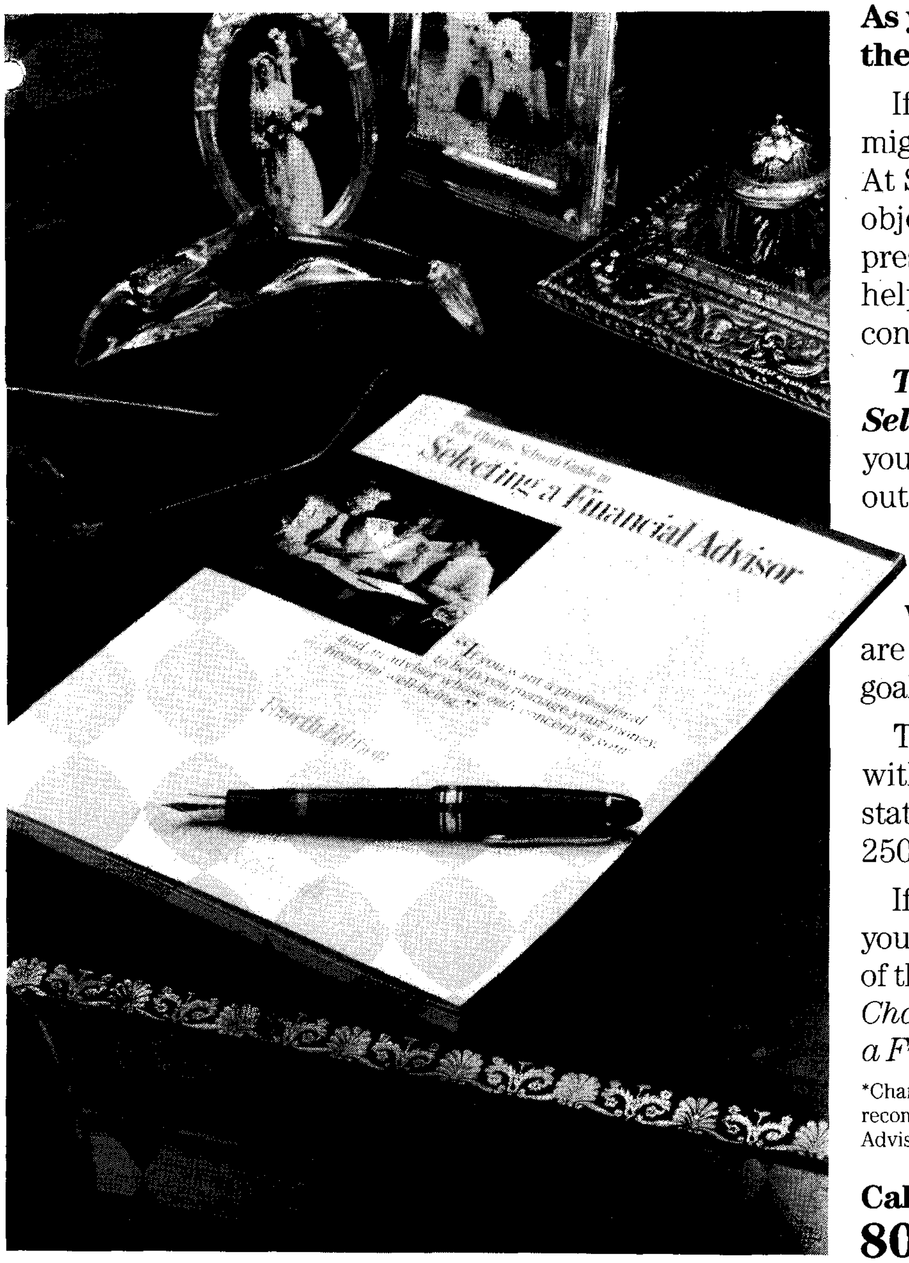

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GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE THEATRE

We hope that right this minute some enterprising Jungian out there is studying that queen of the toy store, Barbie, because, based on a quick survey of the cultural landscape, the tressy, tow-headed doll has become a major archetype for second-wave baby boomers. The filmmaker Todd Haynes ("Poison") made a facsimile of the blond goody-girl the star of his (literally) heartwrenching sub-rosa saga, "Superstar: The Karen Carpenter Story." A. M. Homes, in her touching short story "A Real Doll," used a young boy's fixation with the plastic object to say a thing or two about obsession. Now Jeffrey Essmann, as part of his very funny one-man, many-character show "Artificial Reality," has given the bimbo a *boîte*. Mattel didn't want her to have the place, says Essmann, who spiels while wearing a satin sheath, nippleless bazooms, and a platinum wig whose wastrel strands seem to belong more to Midge, the tough stuff next door, than to the consumerist fantasy herself. But now that she does own a night spot her whole gang wants to perform. Especially the anatomically idiosyncratic Ken, who has a Wayne Newton-like act, and who's never quite got over being Mr. Barbie.

To be fair, it must be said that Mr. Essmann has been giving us his version of Barbie since 1982. Only in this gig, however, has the character really come into her own. She benefits from the high relief into which Mr. Essmann's other, generally more cerebral characters throw her. There's Jean-Louis DeBris, the postwar café existentialist, whose ill luck extends even to his landlady. (Her husband was killed for collaborating—with the Italians.) And the Serbo-Croatian poet Patsy (given name Nadja), product of an imagination as familiar with "The Belle of Amherst" as with the technical complexities of Nathalie Sarraute's memoir, "Childhood." Mr. Essmann's deceptive erudition, as well as his deadpan manner, suggests an affinity with Woody Allen. Like Mr. Allen, Mr. Essmann has had an interest in the Soviet Union: he's currently revising his musical "Bella, Belle of Byelorussia" in light of recent political developments.

Betty Comden and Adolph Green, lyricists of "The Will Rogers Follies"

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OPENINGS AND PREVIEWS

(Please call the phone number listed with the theatre for schedule and ticket information.)

Advice from a Caterpillar—A romantic comedy by Douglas Carter Beane, with Ally Sheedy, Dennis Christopher, David Lansbury, and Harley Venton. Previews April 1-3. Opens April 4 at 6:45. (Lucille Lortel, 121 Christopher St. 924-8782.)

Black Eagles—A play by Leslie Lee, about the Tuskegee Airmen, the black fighter pilots of the Second World War. In previews. (Manhattan Theatre Club, at City Center, 131 W. 55th St. 581-7907.)

Blue Hill Troupe—Presenting benefit performances of **THE MIKADO.** The brief engagement opens April 2 at 8, and runs through April 6. (Hunter College Auditorium, Park Ave. at 69th St. For information about tickets, call 348-6330.)

The Good Times Are Killing Me—A play by Lynda Barry. Angela Goethals and Chandra Wilson head a fourteen-member cast; Mark Brokaw directed. In previews. (Second Stage, Broadway at 76th St. 873-6103.)

I Hate Hamlet—Nicol Williamson, Celeste Holm, and Evan Handler in a new comedy written by Paul Rudnick and directed by Michael Engler. Previews through April 7. Opens April 8 at 6:30. (Walter Kerr, 219 W. 48th St. 582-4022.)

Jeffrey Essmann's Artificial Reality—Mr. Essmann's latest solo show, presented by New York Theatre Workshop. Preview on April 2. Opens April 3 at 8, and runs through April 28. (Perry Street Theatre, 31 Perry St. 279-4200.)

Lucifer's Child—Julie Harris in a one-woman play about Isak Dinesen that was written by William Luce. Previews through April 3. Opens April 4 at 7. (Music Box, 239 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Making History—The New York première of a 1988 play by Brian Friel. A production of the Irish Repertory Theatre. Previews through April 9. Opens April 10 at 8. (Samuel Beckett, 412 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Miss Saigon—Jonathan Pryce, Lea Salonga, Hinton Battle, Barry K. Bernal, Liz Callaway, and Willy Falk in the musical by Claude-Michel Schönberg, Alain Boublil, and Richard Maltby, Jr. Directed by Nicholas Hytner. In previews. (Broadway Theatre, Broadway at 53rd St. 563-2266.)

The Old Boy—A new play by A. R. Gurney, with Stephen Collins. Directed by John Rubinstein. Previews begin April 5. (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Penn & Teller's Refrigerator Tour—The dynamic duo returns to Broadway. Preview on April 2. Opens April 3 at 6:45. (Eugene O'Neill, 230 W. 49th St. 246-0220.)

Red Scare on Sunset—Charles Busch wrote and stars in this comedy about an actress battling Communism in nineteen-fifties Hollywood. Directed by Kenneth Elliott. In previews. (WPA Theatre, 519 W. 23rd St. 206-0523.)

The Secret Garden—Mandy Patinkin and Daisy Eagan lead the cast of a musical based on the Frances Hodgson Burnett classic. Marsha Norman wrote the book and the lyrics, and Lucy Simon provided the score. Susan H. Schulman directed. Previews begin April 5. (St. James, 246 W. 44th St. 246-0102.)

The Will Rogers Follies—A new musical starring Keith Carradine. The book is by Peter Stone, the score by Cy Coleman, and the lyrics by Betty Comden and Adolph Green. Directed and choreographed by Tommy Tune. In previews. (Palace, Broadway at 47th St. 730-8200.)

NEW THIS SEASON

And the World Goes 'Round: The Songs of Kander & Ebb—A musical revue, with Bob Cuccioli, Karen Mason, Brenda Pressley, Jim Walton, and Karen Ziëmba. (Westside, 407 W. 43rd St. 246-0102.)

The Big Love—You could do a good deal worse than this one-woman show, in which the accomplished mimic and comedienne Tracey Ullman impersonates Florence Aadland, the mother of Errol Flynn's teen-age lover, Beverly. There's nothing in it to engage the mind and nothing about it stays with you, but there's nothing phony about it either. What Jay Presson Allen and her daughter Brooke have fashioned out of Aadland's tell-all memoir is simply a good old-fashioned play. (Reviewed in our issue of 3/18/91.) (Plymouth, 236 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

Buddy: The Buddy Holly Story—Anyone who thinks that rock and roll lives on had better steer clear of this ersatz docu-musical about the life of Buddy Holly. (11/19/90) (Shubert, 225 W. 44th St. 239-6200.)

Candida—Laurie Kennedy has the title role in a revival of Shaw's play. (Playhouse 91, at 316 E. 91st St. 831-2000. Closes April 21.)

Carreño—A show based on the life of Teresa Carreño, the Venezuelan composer, pianist, conductor, and singer. Written and performed by Pamela Ross and directed by Gene Frankel. Most performances are in English; a few are in Spanish. (INTAR, 420 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

Daugherty & Field Off-Broadway—The cabaret team of Bill Daugherty and Robin Field in a revue of swing and show tunes. (Double Image, 15 Vandam St. 924-1120.)

The Fever—A one-man play written by, and starring, Wallace Shawn. (Mitzi E. Newhouse, Lincoln Center. 239-6200. Closes April 21.)

Fiddler on the Roof—The Israeli actor Topol makes a commanding Tevye—the best of all of them—in this production, which falls somewhere between revival and facsimile. The songs are by Bock and Harnick; the dances and staging are re-created from the Jerome Robbins originals; and the costumes are from the Patricia Zipprodt originals. (12/3/90) (Gershwin, 51st St. west of Broadway. 586-6510.)

Henry IV, Parts I and II—The sixteenth and seventeenth plays in the Public's Shakespeare Marathon, both directed by JoAnne Akalaitis, will run in repertory through April 7. (3/11/91) (Public, 425 Lafayette St. 598-7150.)

I Can Get It for You Wholesale—A revival of the Jerome Weidman-Harold Rome musical, presented by the American Jewish Theatre. (Susan Bloch, 307 W. 26th St. 633-9797. Closes April 21.)

Jackie Mason: Brand New—The comedian brings his one-man show to Broadway again. (Neil Simon, 250 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.)

Jean Cocteau Repertory—Presenting three plays in rotating repertory: Shakespeare's **JULIUS CAESAR** (starting April 5) and a double bill of George Büchner's **WOYZECK** and **LEONCE AND LENA.** (Bouwerie Lane Theatre, 330 Bowery at Bond St. 677-0060.)

The Kingfish—A play about Huey Long, by Larry L. King and Ben Z. Grant. With John McConnell in the title role. (John Houseman, 450 W. 42nd St. 564-8038.)

The Learned Ladies—The Molière work, in a new translation by Freyda Thomas. Featuring Jean Stapleton. (CSC, 136 E. 13th St. 677-4210. Closes April 7.)

Lost in Yonkers—There's not one glimmer of honesty or authenticity in this family melodrama by Neil Simon. Set in New York during the Second World War, it's about what happens when a cowering, pathetic man has to leave his two adolescent sons with his intimidating mother for the better part of a year. (3/11/91) (Richard Rodgers, 226 W. 46th St. 221-1211.)

Mambo Mouth—John Leguizamo's show, in

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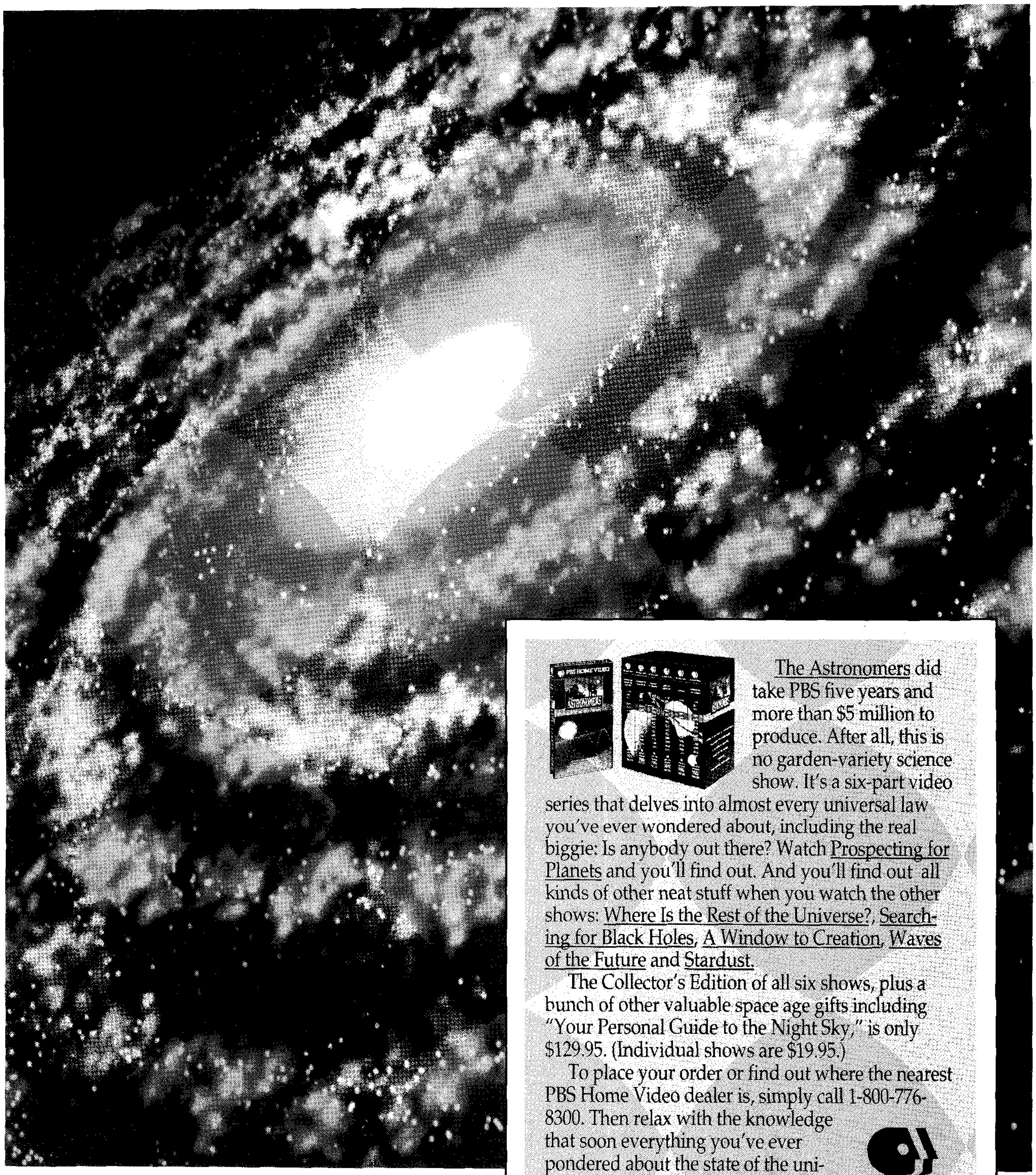

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THE THEATRE–Cont'd

which he portrays seven Hispanic characters. (American Place, 111 W. 46th St. 840-3074.)

MULE BONE—This play with music, a collaboration between Zora Neale Hurston and Langston Hughes, was written in 1930, during the Harlem Renaissance, but was never produced, because the authors quarrelled. The setting is a small Florida town with an exclusively black population. The first act, brimming with episodes (and humor and characters), is just this side of chaos, but the second act tells a clear story about the trial of a young man who knocks out his best friend with a mule bone. Under the strong direction of Michael Schultz, every moment is lively. The members of the company represent the cream of black theatre over the past twenty years or so. Taj Mahal was both composer and arranger. (2/25/91) (Ethel Barrymore, 243 W. 47th St. 239-6200.)

OH, KAY!—A joyous revival of a musical originally done here in 1926, this time with an all-black (all-gifted) company. The score, by George Gershwin, with lyrics by Ira Gershwin, and the singing and nimble dancing of the whole company are so glorious that they nearly compensate for the damnable din of amplification. (11/1/90) (Lunt-Fontanne, 205 W. 46th St. 246-0102.)

ONCE ON THIS ISLAND—A musical by Lynn Ahrens (book and lyrics) and Stephen Flaherty (score), which is based on Rosa Guy's 1985 novel, "My Love, My Love." (Booth, 222 W. 45th St. 239-6200.)

PYGMALION—Anthony Heald is Professor Henry Higgins, Madeleine Potter is Eliza Doolittle, and Earle Hyman is Colonel Pickering in this production of Shaw's comedy. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Roundabout, 100 E. 17th St. 420-1883.)

A ROOM OF ONE'S OWN—Eileen Atkins is sublime in this stage adaptation of the Virginia Woolf essay. Easily the most civilized entertainment on offer, this one-woman show is something every lively-minded young woman above the age of fifteen—fourteen if she's particularly lively-minded—will want to see. (3/18/91) (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)

SABINA AND LUCRECIA—A play by Alberto Adellach. Three performances a week are in English; four are in Spanish. (Puerto Rican Traveling Theatre, 304 W. 47th St. 354-1293. Closes April 21.)

SHADOWLANDS—William Nicholson's vulgar stage adaptation of the beautiful television film about C. S. Lewis that he wrote for the BBC is essentially a tourist trap. It Broadwayizes everything that in the movie was subtle or sincere. Directed by Elijah Moshinsky; with Nigel Hawthorne and Jane Alexander. (11/26/90) (Brooks Atkinson, 256 W. 47th St. 719-4099.)

THE SUBSTANCE OF FIRE—Ron Rifkin gives an impeccable performance as a publisher—a refugee from Nazi Germany—whose difficulties with his grown children are no greater than those with himself. The play, by Jon Robin Baitz, is not flawless, but it is consistently absorbing and very well acted, under the direction of Daniel Sullivan. With Sarah Jessica Parker, Patrick Breen, Jon Tenney, and Maria Tucci. (4/1/91) (Playwrights Horizons, 416 W. 42nd St. 279-4200.)

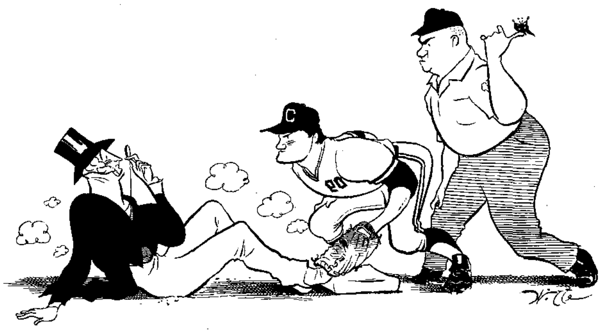
THE SUM OF US—David Stevens' poignant comedy about how hard it is for parents and children to break free of each other (particularly if they get on too well) is set in present-day Australia. Depending on how you look at it, the play is either very dear and rather flawed or rather dear and very flawed, but cast and direction are both excellent. (11/5/90) (Cherry Lane, 38 Commerce St. 989-2020.)

TAKING STEPS—This very funny farce by the inspired English playwright Alan Ayckbourn is a technical as well as a dramatic triumph. The action, which takes place in a three-story suburban house, is played on a one-level set; the actors mime climbing up and down steps indicated on a path surrounding the set. The plot deals with a marriage that is coming apart, to the surprise and shock of the husband. The performances, unfortunately, do not match the precision of the play (except for those of Christopher Benjamin, as the husband, and Spike McClure, as a young solicitor). But no ineptitude can dim the brilliance of this comedy. (3/4/91) (Circle in the Square, 50th St. west of Broadway. 239-6200.)

YORK THEATRE COMPANY—Presenting a revival of **A FUNNY THING HAPPENED ON THE WAY TO THE FORUM.** Jack Cirillo heads a cast of sixteen. (2 E. 90th St. 534-5366.)

LONG RUNS

CATS: Some twenty poems about cats by T. S. Eliot, set to music by Andrew Lloyd Webber. A mighty spectacle about mighty little, owing its effectiveness to Trevor Nunn's direction and to John Napier's sets and costumes. (Winter Garden, Broadway at 50th St. 239-6200.) . . . **CITY OF ANGELS:** Larry Gelbart, dramatist; Cy Coleman, composer; Billy Byers, arranger; and Michael Blakemore, director, are all in top form in this sharp, jokey musical satire about Hollywood in the forties. (Virginia, 245 W. 52nd St. 246-0102.) . . . **THE FANTASTICKS:** The longest-running long run turns thirty-one in May. (Sullivan Street Playhouse, 181 Sullivan St., at Bleecker St. 674-3838.) . . . **FORBIDDEN BROADWAY 1991:** A source of continual merriment, this revue is a cluster of parodies of shows along the Great White Way. Gerard Alessandrini conceived and directed it, and wrote the witty, barbed lyrics. (Theatre East, 211 E. 60th St. 838-9090.) . . . **FOREVER PLAID:** Stuart Ross's loving tongue-in-cheek salute to the "guy groups" of the fifties is a real treat. Bring your mom. Hell, bring the whole family. (Steve McGraw's, 158 W. 72nd St. 595-7400.) . . . **GRAND HOTEL:** The dazzling imagination of Tommy Tune's direction and choreography and the dazzling scenery by Tony Walton almost make up for the inner vacancy of this show, but not quite. The story and characters are skimpy and the music is undistinguished. Nevertheless, there isn't a boring moment. (Martin Beck, 302 W. 45th St. 246-0102.) . . . **LES MISÉRABLES:** The stars of this musical adaptation of the Victor Hugo novel are John Napier's settings and David Hersey's lighting. (Imperial, 249 W. 45th St. 239-6200.) . . . **NUNSENSE:** A musical comedy by Dan Goggin. (Douglas Fairbanks, 432 W. 42nd St. 239-4321.) . . . **OTHER PEOPLE'S MONEY:** Jerry Sterner's comedy about a New York corporate raider's attempt to take over a decorous New England business maintains its suspense from beginning to end. (Minetta Lane Theatre, 18 Minetta Lane, east of Sixth Ave., between W. 3rd and Bleecker Sts. 420-8000.) . . . **THE PHANTOM OF THE OPERA:** This much ballyhooed Andrew Lloyd Webber musical is fun—if you're not bothered by theatre that cares not a whit for words and contains not one ghost of an idea. Except for the sets, everything about the show is negligible. (Majestic, 245 W. 44th St. 239-6200.) . . . **PRELUDE TO A KISS:** Craig Lucas's entertaining romantic comedy slips into fantasy when an old man kisses a bride at her wedding. With Steve Guttenberg. (Helen Hayes, 240 W. 44th St. 944-9450.) . . . **SIX DEGREES OF SEPARATION:** You're best off knowing nothing about the John Guare play other than that it represents a perfect meeting of the playwright, director Jerry Zaks, and actress Stockard Channing. Out of a true story—one apparently about celebrity and Good Samaritanism—Guare has fashioned a wistful comedy about race, class, money, imagination, collective conscience, individual psyche, and the impulse toward art. (Vivian Beaumont, Lincoln Center. 239-6200.) . . . **SMOKE ON THE MOUNTAIN:** This loving satire of old-time gospel music, set in 1938, is perfectly delightful. Written by Connie Ray, it re-creates a Saturday-night service at a small church in rural North Carolina, where a family of gospel singers have been invited to appear. With Reathel Bean and Kevin Chamberlain. (Lamb's, 130 W. 44th St. 997-1780.)



DANCE

Although Balanchine likes girls, his is an angelic vision; dancers are sent (like Toumanova) for his purpose.—*Lincoln Kirstein, "The New York City Ballet"*

THIS passage came to mind recently when we learned that the School of American Ballet had just finished its annual auditions across the country for its summer program—a key point of entry into the Balanchine legacy for many aspiring dancers. Of course, in these times it costs an arm and a leg to send anything anywhere, and angels are no exception. Money was certainly a constant topic of discussion during a day of celebrations several weeks ago for S.A.B.'s de-luxe, custom-designed studios and dormitories in the brand-new Samuel B. and David Rose Building, across 65th Street from Lincoln Center Plaza. As one person, referring to the beleaguered economy, said, "This building got completed just under the wire."

During the festivities, Mr. Kirstein himself was on hand to thank the angels who made the angels possible. Referring to a list of important S.A.B. donors over the years since its founding, in 1934, he said to a packed house, "I can't read eighty-two names; they know who they are. But I must name Eddie Warburg. He paid for Mr. Balanchine's steamship to New York, and guaranteed the first years of the school." As it happened, we later ran into Mr. Warburg, a genial man in casual clothes who was watching a men's class taught by Stanley Williams. In the corridor afterward, we asked Mr. Warburg how he and Mr. Kirstein had come to be friends. "Lincoln and I started off together in the Harvard class of 1930, at Gore Hall," he said. Around us, dancers were passing back and forth. "Lincoln's just a few years older than I," Mr. Warburg added. "I studied at his feet." Suddenly, amid the point shoes and men's slippers, a big pair of black Reeboks hove into view. Mr. Warburg looked up from his ruminations and found Mr. Kirstein's craggy face suspended over the Reeboks. "Those feet," said Mr. Warburg, and he bowed.

ERICK HAWKINS DANCE COMPANY—Final performances. April 2 at 8: "Cantilever Two," "Killer-of-Enemies: The Divine Hero," "Intensities of Space, and Wind" (première), and "New Moon." . . . ¶ April 3 at 8: "Today, with Dragon," "Intensities of Space, and Wind," "Plains Daybreak," and "Heyoka." . . . ¶ April 4 at 8: "Cantilever Two," "Killer-of-Enemies: The Divine Hero," and "Agathlon." . . . ¶ April 5 at 8: "Summer-Clouds People," "Intensities of Space, and Wind," "Agathlon," and "Heyoka." . . . ¶ April 6 at 2: "Cantilever Two," "Killer-of-Enemies: The Divine Hero," "Intensities of Space, and Wind," and "Heyoka." . . . ¶ April 6 at 8: "Cantilever Two," "Killer-of-Enemies: The Divine Hero," "Intensities of Space, and Wind," and "New Moon." . . . ¶ April 7 at 2: "Cantilever Two," "Killer-of-Enemies: The Divine Hero," "Intensities of Space, and Wind," and "Hurrah!" . . . ¶ April 7 at 7:30: "Agathlon," "New Moon," and "Cantilever Two." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

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DANCE—Cont'd

of "Tell Me the Truth About Love" and "Flash Point." (Florence Gould Hall, 55 E. 59th St. 355-6160. April 4 at 7:30, a benefit performance; and April 5-6 at 8.)

Juilliard Dance Ensemble—Benefit performances of "Nocturne" (première), "Short Symphony," "Cinque Madrigali" (New York première), and "Airs." (Juilliard Theatre, 155 W. 65th St. April 5-6 and April 8 at 8, and April 7 at 3. For information about tickets, call 874-7515.)

American Ballroom Theatre—Opening performances of a two-week engagement that will run through April 21. April 9 at 7:30: "Posin' " (New York première), "The Rainbow Room," and "Tango & Waltz." . . . ¶ April 10 at 8: "It Takes Two" (New York première), "Presley Pieces," and "Tango & Waltz." (Joyce Theatre, 175 Eighth Ave., at 19th St. 242-0800.)

NIGHT LIFE

"THANK you very much. That piece was a blues and this next piece is what we call a standard."

The other night, we heard the twenty-seven-year-old pianist Marcus Roberts perform at St. Ann's, in Brooklyn. Hearing jazz in a church—regardless of what religion one is, or isn't—always makes for a more hushed occasion than hearing jazz in, say, a smoky, windowless basement. Still, we imagine that Roberts' recital would have been somewhat solemn even if he hadn't been flanked by stained-glass windows or hadn't had an immense, floodlit, spired altar for a backdrop. The pianist is an earnest student of jazz. He approaches the form with something like awe.

Roberts was discovered in the mid-eighties by the jazz recruitment officer Wynton Marsalis, with whom he toured and recorded for six years. His latest albums—a blues workout called "Deep in the Shed" and, more recently, a solo-piano homage to Monk, Ellington, and Jelly Roll Morton called "Alone with Three Giants"—are out-and-out exceptional. At St. Ann's, a suit-and-tied Roberts, who has a funny habit of pretending to whisk back tux tails before starting a number, played music from both records, occasionally stopping to give brief American Music 101 lectures of the variety quoted above. (At one point, Roberts lampooned his own tendency to state the obvious when he laughed and said, "That was 'It Had to Be You.' Yep. That's right.") In general, Roberts cuts a quiet, intense figure onstage, sitting stone still during applause, attacking even boisterous stride passages with decorum. The audience was considerably less reserved. By the end of Roberts' recital, there was a great deal of whooping in St. Ann's.

(A highly arbitrary listing, in which boldface type is used to pick out a few of the more notable performers in town. . . . ¶ Musicians and night-club proprietors live complicated lives that are subject to last-minute change; it is therefore always advisable to call ahead.)

Algonquin Hotel, 59 W. 44th St. (840-6800)—Until April 6, **SALLY ANN HOWES** will be performing in the Oak Room. Howes' matronly, operetta-style soprano packs its strongest punch in numbers like "Losing My Mind" (from "Follies") and Cole Porter's "Make It Another Old-Fashioned, Please" (served here from atop the piano, with a full measure of bitters). Her show is terribly wholesome—it includes a medley about dancing, another about beauty, and another about her late son, the composer Christopher Adler, and it even ends with a hymn. British songbird **IRIS WILLIAMS** starts up on April 9, with a show pragmatically titled "An Evening of Mostly Kern." Shows Tuesdays through Thursdays at nine-fifteen, and Fridays and Saturdays at nine-fifteen and eleven-fifteen. Dining.

Milton Nascimento at the Ritz

Arthur's Tavern, 57 Grove St. (675-6879)—A quirky, endearing Village watering hole, perpetually decorated for the holidays—all of them at once. The musicians work in the back of the room, in a well ringed by a bar—a setup that seems to bring out the latent show-biz tendencies in some of the bar's patrons. Tuesdays through Thursdays belong to Al Bundy, Fridays and Saturdays to Mabel Godwin, and Sundays to Lee Lorenz and the Creole Cookin' Jazz Band. Music from nine-thirty.

Ballroom, 253 W. 28th St. (244-3005)—**PHOEBE LÉGÈRE** has more or less sublet this tony cabaret, her engagement having now been extended through April 21. One has never known how seriously to take the wonderfully campy, over-the-top singer, and she seems to like it that way. On the one hand, there's the fact that Légère's a trained pianist, cellist, and accordionist, and the fact that she has a four-octave vocal range and has written an opera. On the other hand, there's the fact that she appeared in "The Toxic Avenger II," the fact that she is double-jointed and can play piano with one leg hitched up behind her head, and the fact that her opera is about a three-hundred-and-fifty-pound cleaning woman who becomes President. Go figure, but go. Dining.

Birdland, 2745 Broadway, at 105th St. (749-2228)—A pleasant, but hardly thrilling, place where patrons are served good jazz and iffy soul food. The club isn't terribly upscale, but it ain't a grungy Village joint either. There are some freestanding plants, some yellow lighting, some slick surfaces, and a gallery of awful jazz portraits. Lately, the club has been booking some very fine talent. **ROLAND HANNA** leads a trio April 1-6; the **JOEY DE FRANCESCO** quintet begins work on April 8. Music from nine. Dining.

Blue Note, 131 W. 3rd St., near Sixth Ave. (475-8592)—A jazz club that would be a perfect stop on a bus tour (there's even a souvenir shop that sells Kodak). It's a good idea to make a reservation and show up well in advance. Bassist **RAY BROWN,** whose list of notable associates moves from Charlie Parker to Ella Fitzgerald to Oscar Peterson, heads up a trio April 2-7. Vibraphonist **GARY BURTON** begins work on April 9, swapping sets with the **JOHN SCOFIELD** quartet. First set at nine. Dining.

Bottom Line, 15 W. 4th St., at Mercer St. (228-6300)—Rock bands used to play here, didn't they? At least *once* in a while? Lately, the Bottom Line has adhered to the do-one-thing-and-do-it-well philosophy—a.k.a. the Kentucky Fried Chicken principle—rather fastidiously, booking almost exclusively country and folk acts. There's probably nothing wrong with that, except that the club was such a great place to hear rock—big, low-key, convivial—and that music here of late has seemed a bit warmed over. **LOUDON WAINWRIGHT III** appears April 5-6; **MITCH RYDER** comes in on April 7; the fine banjoist **BELA FLECK** and his **FLECKTONES** appear on April 8. Shows at eight and eleven. Burgers, fries, and other things to make your heart beat faster.

Bradley's, 70 University Pl., at 11th St. (228-6440)—A neighborhood bar in the heart of N.Y.U. country. It's advisable to get all your talking done between sets, because once the first chord is struck, the audience here—with a little help from the management—becomes as quiet as a church congregation. **BILL MAYS** and **RAY DRUMMOND** are here through April 6. Music from nine-forty-five. Dining.

Café Sin-é, 122 St. Marks Pl. (982-0370)—An unpretentious storefront café devoted to such things as Irish stew and the *Irish Times.* There's no stage per se—and the management eschews such things as advance bookings—but bohemian musicians gather around a piano and work up some nice, wistful sets while bohemian patrons sit writing in journals, rolling cigarettes, or lingering over one of the two varieties of beer sold here: Budweiser and Rolling Rock. The café is a nice place to while away an hour, and you never know who'll turn up and tune up. Music generally begins at about eight-thirty.

Carlyle Hotel, Madison Ave. at 76th St. (744-1600)—The Café Carlyle, a snug, windowless enclave in the doorman district, features discreet waiters, three walls of murals, and **EARTHA KITT,** who, through April 6, growls and purrs on the subjects of men and money. Sets at nine-thirty and eleven-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays. . . . ¶ Across the hall, in Bemelmans' Bar, **RONNY WHYTE** presides at the piano from nine-thirty Tuesdays through Saturdays.

Cat Club, 76 E. 13th St. (505-0090)—Bell-bottoms and peace signs aren't the only nostalgia craze in town: at the Cat Club on Sunday nights, the nineteen-thirties are in vogue. On other nights of the week, the club attracts a scruffy leather-and-lace crowd, but Sundays belong to the Swing Dance Society, whose passion is the Lindy Hop, a dance named after Charles Lindbergh. The dancers are young and old, graceful and flatfooted; the drink of choice is the Swing Dance Punch; and the staff looks alternately bemused and bewildered by the genteel crowd. **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS** call the tunes on April 7. Music from eight to midnight.

Condon's, 117 E. 15th St. (254-0960)—A snug, candlelit catacomb just east of Union Square. **MARLENA SHAW** works with a trio April 2-7; saxophonist **LOU DONALDSON** leads a quartet as of April 9. Music after nine.

Eagle Tavern—355 W. 14th St., at Ninth Ave. (924-0275)—On Fridays, in the back room of this bar, you can drink a tankard of cool stout and listen to traditional Irish music; on Saturdays, you can drink from the cup that cheers and listen to bluegrass and old-timey music. Andy McGann and Johnny Cronin play fiddle and button accordion duets on April 5.

Fat Tuesday's, 190 Third Ave., at 17th St. (533-7902)—If submarines had jazz clubs, they might look like this basement haunt, which is reached by passing through a tight corridor where you half expect to bump into Admiral Nimitz. This is not the place for those with a fear of intimacy: at the front tables you can go eye to eye with your favorite performers, and no matter where you're seated there's not much room to practice your T'ai Chi. The **RON CARTER** quintet is in sway through April 7. On Mondays, guitarist-inventor **LES PAUL,** the Thomas Edison of reverb, leads a trio. Music from eight. Dining.

Fortune Garden Pavilion, 209 E. 49th St. (753-0101)—With jazz you get eggroll. At this posh-looking two-floor Chinese restaurant, tucked into a midtown skyscraper, you'll find a lot of businesspeople and a lot of hanging plants. In the middle of the main dining room, you'll also find a trio led by the singer-clarinettist **RICK HARDEMAN,** April 2-7. Music from six-thirty.

Kilimanjaro, 531 W. 19th St. (627-2333)—From the outside, this club, which is housed in a long, low brick building in deserted far-west Chelsea, looks like either a bowling alley or an automobile showroom, but inside you'll find all sorts of African music, as well as calypso, reggae, and other world-beat stuff.

Knitting Factory, 47 E. Houston St., near Mulberry St. (219-3055)—Situated in a neighborhood that boasts the Puck Building to the west and a host of windshield washers to the east, this modest space provides a forum for free-thinking musicians. Beat and melody are optional, "music" and "noise" relative terms. The **ROOTLESS COSMOPOLITANS,** a jazz-rock-and-what-have-you ensemble led by guitarist-in-demand Marc Ribot, appear on April 2; **HENRY THREADGILL'S VERY VERY CIRCUS** claims April 5-6. Music after nine.

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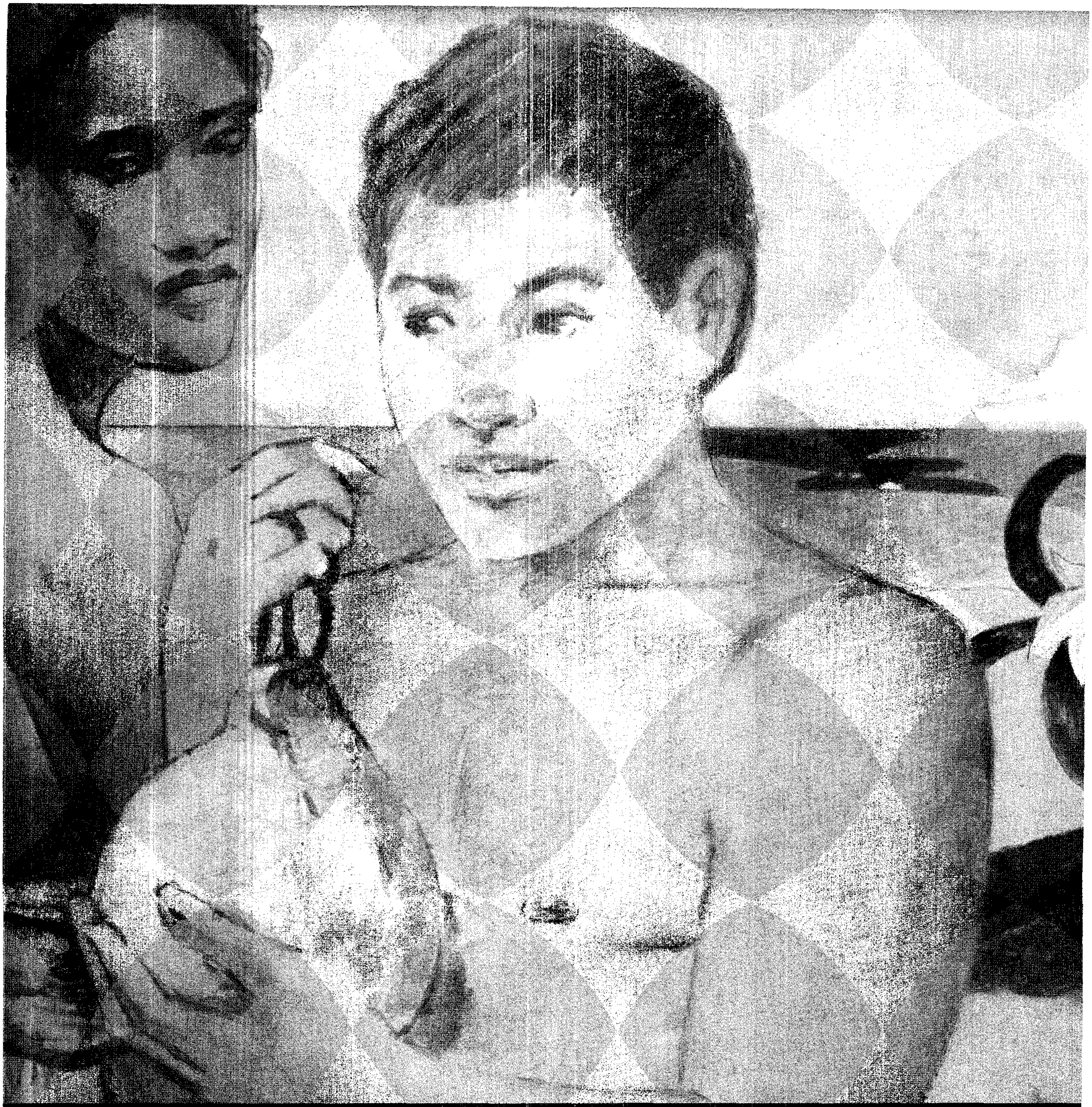

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XOTIC ADVENTURES

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

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AMONG FRIENDS

On a hill near the intersection of the West and Center Drives in Brooklyn's Prospect Park lies a little Quaker cemetery, its unadorned tombstones looking like rows of crooked teeth. Built in 1846, it predates the park and, surprisingly, is still in use today. Prior to the Civil War, planners of the city of Brooklyn envisioned a park at its center, which would be intersected by Flatbush Avenue. The plan didn't get off the ground until after the war, when James Stranahan, an entrepreneur and president of the Board of Commissioners of Prospect Park, enlisted Calvert Vaux to draw up a design. (Mr. Vaux subsequently brought aboard his former partner in the design of Central Park, Frederick Law Olmsted.) Vaux and Olmsted foresaw, however, that the Flatbush thoroughfare—then a country dirt road bustling with horse-drawn carriages and pedestrians—would develop into future gridlock unbefitting the idyllic setting. They proposed to shift the park westward, a plan that encroached on Quaker property. As cities will have their way, thirty-one acres of land were acquired under eminent domain by the city of Brooklyn, but the twenty-acre cemetery was deeded back to the sect.

On April 7 at 2, Lynn Sampsell and Meryl Redisch, of the Urban Park Rangers, will conduct a walking tour of the cemetery, leaving from Prospect Park Southwest and 16th Street. This will provide a rare opportunity, since the cemetery is normally off limits. Visitors will discover that the burial ground contains the graves of members of the Mott family (of apple-juice fame) and of the actor Montgomery Clift, who, following his death in 1966, joined a century of ancestors in the family plot.

Lone Star Roadhouse, 240 W. 52nd St. (245-2950)—A Texan hangout where good old boys and Southern sorority girls mix with urban cowboys and those just looking. "Roadhouse" is an accurate description: it's a checked-tablecloth, long-necked-Bud, side-of-beef kind of place. **SCREAMIN' JAY HAWKINS,** the venerable blues shouter whose music put some fire into Jim Jarmusch's "Stranger Than Paradise," appears April 5-6. Music after nine. Dining.

Manny's Car Wash, 1558 Third Ave., at 87th St. (369-2583)—A bright spot on the little-heralded Upper East Side club scene. Don't go expecting to be sprayed with soapy water and massaged by large brushes: the fluorescent sign outside is the only car-wash reference. Inside, the place looks like an adman's idea of a blues bar. Guitarist **CLARENCE (GATEMOUTH) BROWN** steps in on April 4, with the Anthony Kane Blues Band. Music from nine-fifteen.

Marquee, 547 W. 21st St. (929-3257)—A newish, black-on-black rock club that still has some kinks to work out. The club has some of the most prescient alternative-rock bookings in New York—bands play here when it's still cool to like them. But, on the downside, the Marquee is a sweatbox, and lasting out a set here can be a test of endurance for anybody not willing to die, or at least sweat an awful lot, for rock and roll. The patrons are twentyish and pretty well behaved. There's not always enough elbow room for such things as stage-diving, but somebody usually does it anyway. Scuba Diva is here on April 5, and Tragically Hip appears on April 10.

Michael's Pub, 211 E. 55th St. (758-2272)—There's more to Michael's Pub than Woody Allen, whose occasional Monday-night Dixieland binges have given the place a little star cachet. Non-filmmakers can usually be found onstage here the rest of the week, in a main dining room that strives for the appearance of a British pub but looks more like a good old American family restaurant. Still, there's a real nice red telephone booth just inside the door. A twentieth-anniversary tribute to Sondheim's "Follies" runs for four weeks beginning April 2; with **JO SULLIVAN, DAVID CRYER, EMILY LOESSER,** and others. Tuesdays through Saturdays at nine-fifteen.

Red Blazer Too, 349 W. 46th St. (262-3112)—A place where a fella and a gal can put on the feedbag, get a little tight, and cut a rug. Mondays belong to Howie Wyeth's ragtime trio, Tuesdays to **VINCE GIORDANO AND THE NIGHTHAWKS,** Wednesdays to Tropical Force, Fridays to Rick Hardeman's group, and Saturdays to Bob Cantwell's band. Show times vary. David Allyn's seventeen-piece swing band holds forth on April 4.

Ritz, 254 W. 54th St. (541-8900)—A rock establishment where the customer is not always right. If you're willing to endure proof-of-drinking-age wristbands, primitive notions of crowd control, and a staff of "I breaka you face" security people, you can usually find some worthwhile bands. April 6: **MILTON NASCIMENTO.** April 9: the **RADIATORS.** Shows begin at nine Sundays through Thursdays, and at eleven Fridays and Saturdays.

Russian Tea Room, 150 W. 57th St. (265-0947)—Small, elegant, forest green. Known for, among countless other things, a scene in "Manhattan" in which Woody Allen teaches his young son how to "score." Singer **MELISSA NEWMAN**—daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Bridge—comes in on April 7. Shows Sundays at eight and ten-thirty. Dining.

Sweet Basil, 88 Seventh Ave. S., at Bleecker St. (242-1785)—An itinerary stop for the international jazz groupies who, on any given night, can be seen roaming the streets of the Village. Up front, there's a glass-enclosed sidewalk cafe; in back is a larger room, with a pressed-tin ceiling, red brick, and more pinewood than a ski lodge. Tenor saxophonist **GEORGE ADAMS** holds forth April 2-7, with his quartet; and pianist **TOMMY FLANAGAN** and his trio begin a two-week engagement on April 9. An electrified big band belonging to trumpeter Miles Evans is in action on Mondays. Tee-off time is ten. Dining.

Village Vanguard, 178 Seventh Ave. S., at 11th St. (255-4037)—The late Max Gordon, who opened this holiest of jazz shrines in 1935, once described the club's early patrons as a mix of "poets, W.P.A. writers, hustlers, broads on the make, and moochers." The **BRANFORD MARSALIS** trio appears April 2-7; **JOHNNY GRIFFIN** begins a week-long gig on April 9. The **VANGUARD JAZZ ORCHESTRA** holds sway on Mondays. Music after nine-thirty.

Wetlands, 161 Hudson St. (966-4225)—Two floors of no-nuke veggie entertainment and consciousness-raising. Listen to bands play in the Summer of Love-muralled back room; buy a tie-dyed T-shirt at the Volkswagen-bus curio shop; catch up on current events at the bulletin board and community calendar. Or, if you'd rather just be mellow, crash out in the basement hippie love pad.

Zanzibar & Grill, 550 Third Ave., at 36th St. (779-0606)—The logo that appears on glasses, napkins, and matchbooks here—a bongo-playing monkey in fez and shades—embodies this pleasant restaurant-bar's blend of Africana and yuppie cool. The eponymous island is evoked by live palms, Rousseau-style murals, and etched-glass jungle scenes; Murray Hill is evoked by everything else. Harpist **DEBORAH HENSON-CONANT** performs April 5-6. Music from nine Sundays through Wednesdays, and from ten Thursdays through Saturdays.

EDGE OF NIGHT LIFE

AND the search for a successor to the Saint frantically continues. It's been almost two decades since New York has been without a long-run gay music-marathon center on Saturday night—the closing of one has always dovetailed into the crowning of another—but since the former-Fillmore East-transmogrified-into-precursor-to-Thunderdome shut its iron doors, the well-fed but momentarily homeless have become increasingly anxious. Up and down the streets they roam, seeking any friendly storm in a port, enduring bottle-necked labyrinths at the South Street Seaport, a reluctantly adaptable Roseland (on one occasion, an angry God of the Harvest Moon Ball caused a septic tidal wave downstairs), and relegation to the upper-left-hand corner of the Roxy.

The newest harbor hopeful is Parallel Bar (at 870 Seventh Avenue), right across from the Fashion Institute of Technology. (On opening Saturday, the crack "How convenient" was heard more times than the word "gym," though Parallel is currently straight on other nights.) Unlike most former candidates, this one appeared with little advance publicity. No matter. Only to out-of-towners is New York a big city. By one o'clock the line to *get on* line was enormous. Once inside, patrons discovered that both the reason for the club's name and its former incarnation were mysteries, but the setting was as familiar as Lucy in the chocolate factory. Despite some murals, the most prominent aspects of the décor were a never-ending coat-check line and undressed dancing men on pedestals, though the latter were eclipsed by one young man prone on a bier, smeared in chocolate sauce and whipped cream, and surrounded by fruit. "If this is the salad bar, what do the Big Macs look like?" flipped one bystander. Others watching their own waistline proceeded to an already sticky dance floor with weird sound and pre-Studio 54 lighting. The club's big advantage is size: there's room enough to roam, but not enough to lose one's core group—a definite plus when vision is impaired (or enhanced, depending on how you look at it). By four-thirty, the reviews had softened to "not bad," "nice try," and "worth another shot." Translation, based on the Official Heard-It, Been-There Manual: I must go down to the sea *again.* Next.

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Ringling Brothers and Barnum & Bailey Circus—The hundred-and-twenty-first version of "The Greatest Show on Earth." (Madison Square Garden. Through April 28. For tickets, call 465-6000.)

"The Easter Show"—A springtime extravaganza, with the Rockettes. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. Through April 4. For tickets, call 247-4777.)

Big Apple Circus—In its annual tour of the outer boroughs. (Cunningham Park, Queens. Through April 7. For tickets, call 268-0055.)

Reno—A one-woman show. And what a show. (INTAR II, 508 W. 53rd St. 279-4200. April 5 at 6 and 10:30, and April 7 at 5.)

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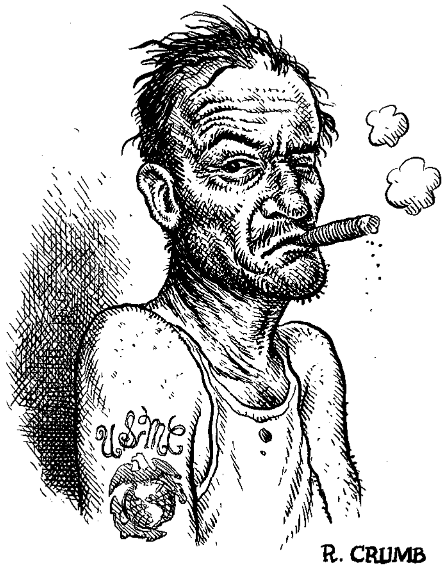


H. C. Westermann

ART

David Salle hasn't shown new work in New York City for three years, which these days is a fairly long time for such a notable artist, albeit one who had perhaps been suffering from a bit of overexposure. But Salle has always been an impresario of feints, on canvas and off, and it was a safe guess that he would emerge from his diffident pupa phase in some new guise, with some new strength. Well, he's back, and better than ever. He looks different (gaunt, kooky, *more* Mephistophelian); he's got a splashy new gallery (Gagosian; his current show runs through May 4); and his six new paintings are a nice big stretch.

This is sort of his Old Master show. Salle's palette, always febrile, is now full of Greuze greiges, sickly High Mannerist yellows, poignantly hollow slate blues. The background of each of these large paintings is a lightly traced, brushed-up reproduction of some connoisseurish Old World thing. Over these scenes and pastorales Salle imposes his skittish and voluble imagery. Empty cartoon blips like floating titties, and empty cartoon blurps like floating turds, punctuate several paintings with their Pop-ish outlines and Nazarine Easter colors. The photo-silk-screened inset is another effectively disruptive new device. In "Hamlet Mind," for instance, the masterwork of the show, a photographic inset of a shrouded shape—a woman in purdah, perhaps—seems an icon of perversity in relation to its more commonly fetishistic counterpart, a painted image of two women in Pierrot costumes, looking scared, as if faced with a disapproving master.

There are all kinds of strange bondage metaphors in the kinky middle distance of these paintings, where literal-minded feminists had best not prowl. Once again Salle-ome performs his old dance of the veils—that nouvelle-vague ballet of mid-thought weirdness, where love slaves beckon and subjects are sometimes loath to reveal their sources, their forms, and, on occasion, their names as well.

MUSEUMS AND LIBRARIES

Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 82nd St.—"The Fauve Landscape" brings together nearly a hundred and twenty-five paintings made between 1904 and 1908 by the Fauvists Derain, Matisse, Braque, and their circle of friends. Through May 5. . . . ¶ Seventeen Dutch-style cupboards crafted in New York and New Jersey between 1650 and 1800. Through April 7. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 9:30 to 5:15, and Friday and Saturday evenings until 8:45.)

Museum of Modern Art, 11 W. 53rd St.—"Art of the Forties" is a cacophonous, exceptionally interesting show (including around three hundred works in many mediums, all from the museum's collection), chock full of messy meanings and emotions and wild contrasts. There is Matisse's exultant "Jazz," but also the little-known Alton Pickens' perfectly ghoulish "Carnival." There is Pinin Farina's gleaming red sports car, the "Cistalia 202 GT," but also David Siqueiros' rough and mud-caked red "Hands." In short, the exhibition offers the viewer an intense and bifurcated picture of a decade that was itself schizophrenically fragmented. Through April 30. . . . ¶ An unprecedented survey of paintings and drawings by the Russian avant-gardist Liubov Popova (1889-1924). Popova was clearly more of a sensualist, as well as a worldlier citizen, than her colleague Kasimir Malevich. Her "Painterly Architectonics" (1916-18), for instance, which are among her best works, convey more visual charm but much less spiritual heat than Malevich's Suprematist icons. Through April 23. . . . ¶ For the museum's "Projects" series, the artist Michael Craig-Martin has created a mural-size three-part wall drawing using architectural drafting tape. Through April 23. (A complementary show of Craig-Martin's work is at Nolan, 560 Broadway, through April 6.) . . . ¶ "Ben Franklin Dreams the New World," a video installation by Peter Rose. Through May 12. (Open daily, except Wednesdays, 11 to 6, and Thursday evenings until 9.)

Guggenheim Museum, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The museum is closed for renovation until autumn.

Whitney Museum of American Art, Madison Ave. at 75th St.—The Biennial's first installment, which focusses on artists whose stars began to rise in the fifties and sixties, can be found on the second floor starting April 2. The second installment, which moves on to artists from the late eighties and nineties, will be on the fourth floor starting April 9. . . . ¶ An exhilarating retrospective of Jasper Johns' drawings and paintings on paper from 1954 to the present. The works are arranged according to themes—sometimes, but not always, chronologically. For Johns, drawing is usually not preparatory to painting but an activity in and of itself. What comes across in the various treatments of such a crucial Johnsian image as, say, the flag—in graphite, watercolor, and white paint—is the artist's unerring hand, which, whether joyful or disengaged, always applies marks in masterly ways. At times this skill comes across as an alienation from the subject matter, or from the work itself; at other times the image and its rendering merge in a blissful union. The many exquisite drawings here are always fascinating, and their dichotomies somehow identify the artist's sphinxian nature more than his paintings do. Through April 7. (Open Tuesdays, 1 to 8, with no admission charge after 6; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 11 to 5; Sundays, noon to 6.)

Brooklyn Museum, Eastern Parkway—"Albert Bierstadt." Appropriately subtitled "Art & Enterprise," this show—the first major Bierstadt exhibition in almost twenty years—is good old vulgar entertainment. This German-born, more or less self-taught late-Hudson River School artist (1830-1902) was an inspired stuntman-painter who relied on a grab bag of compositional and technical tricks to convey his visions of Manifest Destiny. Most often, this means anecdotal scenes and incidental details (dot-and-daub work) in the foreground, with broad and woozy strokes for mountains above and beyond. Through May 5. (Open Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Craft Museum, 40 W. 53rd St.—Thirty-five pieces of furniture made over the past thirty years by Wendell Castle. Many of the pieces incorporate trompe-l'oeil and faux-Art Deco effects. Through April 28. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

American Museum of Natural History, Central Park W. at 79th St.—"Manifest Destiny," a small show of rare nineteenth-century books and illustrations relating to government expeditions into "frontier" areas in the United States. Through April 30. . . . ¶ A show that examines the ecosystems of tropical rain forests around the world, such as those in the Congo basin, the Amazon basin, Madagascar, and Borneo. (Open Mondays, Tuesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5:45; Wednesdays, Fridays, and Saturdays, 10 to 9.)

Bronx Museum of the Arts, 1040 Grand Concourse—"The Nearest Edge of the World," an exhibition of works in several mediums by nine contemporary artists from Cuba. (Open weekdays, except Fridays, 10 to 4:30; Sundays, 11 to 4:30.)

Cooper-Hewitt Museum, Fifth Ave. at 91st St.—The museum's collection—begun in 1896 by the three Hewitt sisters, Amy, Eleanor, and Sarah—is ably represented by "A Design Resource," a show of seven hundred objects. (Open Tuesdays, 10 to 9, with no admission charge from 5 to 9; Wednesdays through Saturdays, 10 to 5; Sundays, noon to 5.)

Grolier Club, 47 E. 60th St.—A hundred and six examples of contemporary American bookbinding, by such artists as Donald Glaister, Deborah Evetts, and Michael Wilcox. (Open daily, except Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Japan Society, 333 E. 47th St.—"Made in Japan: American Influence on Japanese Quilts." Japanese *quilts?* you say. Indeed, as this show demonstrates, quiltmaking has become a phenomenon in Japan, with some six hundred thousand contemporary practitioners. According to Kei Kobayashi, the show's curator, the Japanese became captivated by American quilts around the time of the Bicentennial, and, having their own long history of fine needlework, thought they might try their hand at it. The results, as seen in thirty-eight examples, range from the familiar, such as Saori Tanimoto's "Log Cabin," with its folksy swatches of American and Japanese printed cotton in the traditional pattern of the same name, to works with a marked Japanese sensibility: Michiko Shima's "Japanese Dance," for example, is made of irregular triangular cutouts of silk kimonos from the nineteen-twenties. "Little Village," by Kiyomi Shimada, is somewhere in between, borrowing from the house motif of American quilts but employing the dark-brown and indigo-blue colors of Japanese country clothing. Will we next see "Made in America: The Japanese Influence . . . "? Through April 14. (Open daily, except Mondays, 11 to 5.)

Jewish Museum, at the New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—A hundred sculptures and thirty-one drawings by Jacques Lipchitz. Through April 14. (Open Tuesdays through Thursdays, and Sundays, 10 to 5; Fridays, except April 5, from 10 to 3.)

Morgan Library, 29 E. 36th St.—Ninety sketches, studies, and more elaborate preparatory drawings by the master baroque portraitist Anthony Van Dyck (1599-1641.) Through April 21. . . . ¶ A smaller selection of forty drawings by seventeenth-century Flemish artists such as Rubens, Jacob Jordaens, and David Vinckboons. Through April 21. (Open Tuesdays through Saturdays, 10:30 to 5; Sundays, 1 to 5.)

Museum of American Folk Art, Columbus Ave. at 65th St.—A show of thirty-five antique and contemporary quilts, along with crib and doll quilts and several pieces of quilted clothing. (Open daily, 9 to 9.)

National Academy of Design, Fifth Ave. at 89th St.—The Academy's "Annual Exhibition" includes more than a hundred and fifty paintings, sculptures, drawings, and watercolors. (Open Tuesdays, noon to 8, with no admission charge from 5 to 8; Wednesdays through Sundays, noon to 5.)

The New Museum, 583 Broadway—"Cadences: Icon and Abstraction in Context," an exhibition that includes works by Claudia Matzko, Terry Adkins, Dana Duff, and the French collaborative group BP. Through April 7. (Open Wednesdays, Thursdays, and Sundays, noon to 6; Fridays and Saturdays, noon to 8.)

New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St.—The first document presented in the museum's "Markers of Change" series is one of the twenty-three surviving original copies of the Declaration of Independence. Through April 17. (Open Tuesdays through Sundays, 10 to 5.)

Queens Museum, Flushing Meadow Park—"The AIDS Epidemic Series" includes twenty-one large-scale paintings and eight drawings by Luis Cruz Azaceta. Through April 14. (Open Tuesdays through Fridays, 10 to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, noon to 5.)

GALLERIES—UPTOWN

(Unless otherwise noted, galleries are open Tuesdays through Saturdays from around 10 or 11 to between 5 and 6.)

Hannelore Baron (1926-87)—Small collages and boxed assemblages from the nineteen-eighties. Kurt Schwitters and Joseph Cornell were Baron's most obvious models, but this extremely refined, introverted, and largely self-taught artist was also influenced by Egyptian art, ancient textiles, and religious texts. A very stark biographical note at the gallery informs us that Baron emigrated to this country from Germany in 1941, after her home had been vandalized during Kristallnacht and her family had narrowly escaped extermination. The note goes on to say that she was both claustrophobic and agoraphobic. Her exquisite, extremely miniaturized works convey something of both sensations. Through April 20. (Mathes, 851 Madison Ave., at 70th St.)

"Kulcher Queen and Kulcher Books"—An exhibition of more than forty books and magazines that Lita Hornick published through the Kulcher Press, including "Screen Tests," by Gerard Malanga and Andy Warhol, and "Interlocking Lives," by Alex Katz and Kenneth Koch. Through June 28. (Butler Library, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. Open Mondays through Fridays, 9 to 4:45.)

Short List—**RALSTON CRAWFORD,** Hirschl & Adler, 21 E. 70th St. (through April 20); **DAVID SALLE,** Gagosian, 980 Madison Ave., at 76th St. (through May 4); **MAX WEBER,** Forum, 1018 Madison Ave., at 79th St. (through April 6).

GALLERIES—57TH STREET AREA

John Chamberlain—There was always an Abstract Expressionist sense of conflict to Chamberlain's crushed-metal sculptures, but now it looks as if he's having some fun. Instead of suggesting auto accidents, as did his earlier works, these chunky new sculptures are almost lyrically gestural. Chamberlain is now bending his metal in ways that seem related to Twombly's airiest squiggles, and painting them with sun-enriched tropical colors. While in the past the works were primarily abstract, these mostly freestanding ones have a figurative air. "Rococo Gigolo" has a Hellenistic sense of balance; "Ramfeezled Shiggers" conjures a fatted version of Rodin's "Balzac." Through April 13. (Pace, 32 E. 57th St.)

Timothy Woodman—Recent sculptural reliefs, in oil on aluminum. These folksy vignettes—Benjamin Franklin and his kite, Perseus and Medusa, street venders and Sunday sailors, people performing gardening chores—are irresistible, and clearly the work of an extremely talented artist-craftsman. All are expressed with the same colloquial verve and compositional effervescence. For a moment you may *want* them to be cloying, but they're not, and they will respond to such condescension by disarming you. Through April 6. (Zabriskie, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. Open Mondays.)

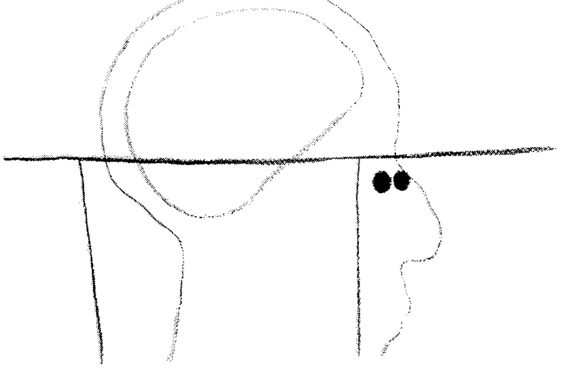
Short List—**LENNART ANDERSON,** Davis & Langdale, 231 E. 60th St. (through April 27); **NELL BLAINE,** Fischbach, 24 W. 57th St. (through April 20); **SUE COE,** Galerie St. Etienne, 24 W. 57th St. (through May 4); **JOHN DE ANDREA,** ACA, 41 E. 57th St. (through April 20); **JOHN HIMMELFARB,** Dintenfass, 50 W. 57th St. (through April 11); **ALEXANDER KOSOLAPOV,** Ruth Siegel, 24 W. 57th St. (through April 6); **ALUM LEACH-JONES,** Ross, 50 W. 57th St. (through April 13); **LOUISA MATTHIASDOTTIR,** Schoelkopf, 50 W. 57th St. (through April 17); **JOAN MITCHELL,** Robert Miller, 41 E. 57th St. (through April 20); **MONDRIAN,** Janis, 110 W. 57th St. (open Mondays, through April 27); **DARRAGH PARK,** De Nagy, 41 W. 57th St. (through April 13); **EMIL SCHUMACHER,** Emmerich, 41 E. 57th St. (through April 6).

GALLERIES—SoHo

Vito Acconci—The art scene hasn't yet found a worthy enough place for the work that this influential conceptual artist has been making over the past decade or so. Acconci tackles basic themes and comes up with the zaniest of solutions. When he's at his best, as he is here, his ideas are at once titillating and off-putting, absurd and poignant, caring and frightening, subversive and, yes, even practical. In this installation the issue is shelter, and the solution is the largest bras ever made. Upstairs there are three of them—an "Adjustable Wall Bra" in various configurations—suspended from pulleys, like marionettes, and arranged as furniture, architecture, lighting, and that inventive niche for the hi-fi equipment. Even these metal breast protectors are protected, with their double cups, plaster on the outside and cloth on the inside. Downstairs, there are models for all-weather bras, with spiral-shaped cups, that might serve as park benches or rain shelters. They suggest why the work of the surrealistic Acconci is among the most inventive, and least built, of today's public art. Through April 6. (Gladstone, 99 Greene St.)

Richard Artschwager—In the sixties, Artschwager had one foot in Pop and the other in minimalism, while his mind was somewhere else entirely, which might explain why the recognition due him did not come his way for two decades. He produced provocative work throughout the sixties, seventies, and early eighties, but once he gained attention his work became uneven, and it began to look as if he were suffering from self-consciousness. But recently he has learned to make an asset of his awkwardness, and the payoff is great. A sense of the surreal informs most of these works, and you're often left to feel like Alice, uncertain if you're too large or too small, too close or too far. The paintings are as textured as ever, but here the images are combined with flat, monochrome Formica. A painting depicting a tank emerging from a jungle has a zigzag frame built right over the image. There's also a painted-wood construction angled along one of the gallery's corners, which looks like a liquid Rorschachian spill; a sharply foreshortened door with a huge shiny metal knob; and two of the artist's familiar cowhide chairs, which are ultra-wide, as if they were envisioned through an oblique mirror, and are horrid yet compelling. Through April 6. (Castelli, 420 West Broadway.)

Sophie Calle—Calle is a conceptual artist with an unusually titillating agenda. Basically, she snoops, but to a degree that most people can only fantasize about. And she is a very methodical fly on the wall: she creates documents—photographs, logbooks, diary texts, and the like—out of her endeavors, some of which have a borderline criminal tinge, or seem to invite danger. These include a number of deeply vicarious adventures, such as following a complete stranger from Paris to Russia and reporting on his every move; taking a temporary job as a hotel chambermaid in Venice and reporting on the contents of the dishevelled rooms, and thereby on the lives of their transient occupants; and contacting every person whose name was listed in an address book that she found on the street. For another of her projects—also one of those great ideas that many might think of but few would act upon—Calle interviewed a number of people who were born blind, asking them to describe their images of beauty, then illustrating these definitions by taking pictures of the subjects and what they described. Some of these people look blind, some don't. Several cite the earth and the sea, and the colors blue and green. This



Self-portrait by Antony Gormley

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two-gallery show, the first in New York for this much-talked-about artist, amounts to a midsize survey of her eighties work. (Hearn, 39 Wooster St., through April 13, open Wednesday evenings until 8; and Luhring Augustine, 130 Prince St., through April 20.)

Antony Gormley—An overwhelming installation consisting of a mass of thirty-five thousand very small, crudely formed terra-cotta figures. Their only facial features are two pencil pokes for eyes, and the finger-molded bodies are similarly lacking detail, as if they were cloaked. The sculptures, which average about six inches in height, are placed side by side to fill the entire massive back gallery. The piece is entitled "Field," and it is a field in the broadest sense, a mental as well as an actual space. All the figures face the viewer, creating an effect that is a bizarre reversal of Caspar David Friedrich's famous depiction of man facing the elements: the viewer replaces the man and the figures the sea, so that the viewer is left to contemplate an unknowable that in turn contemplates him. Through April 27. (Ala, 560 Broadway.)

Helen Mayer Harrison and Newton Harrison—Sometimes mistaken for scientists, the Harrisons have been developing ambitious public-art projects for twenty years. The major project on display here is a proposal—comprising photomurals, drawings, and text—to save the polluted Sava River, in Yugoslavia. Also on view are proposals for a dozen other projects, including one called "Tibet Is the High Ground," for a "Peace Park" on the Tibetan plateau, which was developed with the Dalai Lama. Some of the proposals are laden with overly ponderous poetry, but the drawings that accompany them are quite exquisitely done. The beginning of the text for the Tibetan piece perhaps best defines the Harrisons' sentiments: "We hold that the ocean is a great draftsman." Through April 6. (Feldman, 31 Mercer St. Open Wednesdays until 8.)

Maren Hassinger—A good show of solid minimalist sculptures. The main piece, called "Paradise," consists of a grid of wavy industrial cables, partially unravelled, each embedded in a concrete plinth. The work locates nature in industrial materials, and expresses a sense of love for the abandoned. Through April 13. (Gracie Mansion Gallery, 532 Broadway.)

Robin Hill—Recent Fiberglas-and-resin sculptures of organic, somewhat tortured shapes. One work includes a paper-thin cast of itself, which lies around it in several pieces, as if it had just shed its skin. Another comes in three parts, all cast from the same mold, but in different materials: one form is made of solid wax; the second is made of paper, and is hollow; and the third is made of rubber, seemingly deflated. What starts out as a study of materials ends up as an examination of various degrees of vulnerability. Through April 13. (Lang & O'Hara, 568 Broadway.)

Peter Huttinger—"Eraserhead" came alive, died, and began decomposing in these collages of rotting food and effluvial waste. A piece that at first looks like a gridded collage à la Eva Hesse is made of apple sections surrounded by dried, pressed sausage; a set of huge laboratory slides uses such materials as animal guts, algae, peat, saliva, semen, urine, and flower petals to depict rather unidentifiable rotting forms. Harsh art for insatiable times. Through April 6. (Feature, 484 Broome St. Open Wednesday evenings until 8.)

Annette Lemieux—A show of some very good, poetically haunting works. Conditioned aggression is everywhere, be it in a battalion of helmets on wheels, which portrays the warrior urge as an instinct rooted in childhood, or in an Adirondack hat rack with camouflage baby suits hanging from it. These pieces are both sentimental and detached, and have a peculiar presence. Perhaps the most troubling work, in the best sense of the word, is a large canvas covered with rows of evenly spaced plus signs, all in different shades of brown. At first this looks like an update of Mondrian's plus and minus paintings, but the farther you get from the canvas the more it seems as if there is a hidden image somewhere. Soon you realize that image and field are playing the old maiden/hag trick—that the negative spaces of raw canvas form interconnected swastikas, and the plus signs, far from being abstract and neutral, are actually branded onto the canvas. Through April 13. (Baer, 476 Broome St. Open Wednesdays until 8.)

Robert Mangold—Studies for the "Attic Series." A very attractive group of paintings, each containing a circle, an ellipse, or a figure eight on a geometrically shaped canvas. The works are beautifully painted, in delicate colors, while the canvasses and their images seem to have been linked to create optimal attenuation in the best Kellyesque manner. Through April 6. (Cooper, 149 Wooster St.)

Robert Morris—A show of drawings whose images and texts monumentalize the doldrums. They combine an identifiable range of loaded images—a Parthenon pediment fragment, the Rosenbergs, race riots, Madonna—with images from the artist's earlier works. Through April 6. (Sonnabend, 420 West Broadway.)

Olivier Mosset—Four large, beautifully executed nonobjective paintings in black and green, or green. These are generic commentaries on abstract painting—closer to Buren's striped wallpaper than to Marden's saturated surfaces of contemplation. Through April 13. (Baghoomian, 555 Broadway.)

James Nares—Large gestural drawings made through a photographic process. The artist swings light bulbs, flashlights, and the like through the air, photographs the "drawings" that are thus made, and develops them with green-, purple-, and sepia-tinted chemicals. Some of the images are ribbony, others look like scratchy tufts of long hair. All have an air of quiet intelligence. Through April 13. (Kasmin, 580 Broadway.)

David Rabinowitch—This minimalist sculptor visited Romanesque churches in Germany in the early seventies and has been making large-scale drawings inspired by them for a dozen years. These five, his most recent, have no identifiable reference to their source, nor do they have a clear relationship to the artist's sculptures. What they do have is a keen balance of light, texture, and stroke, and an even keener feel for subtle structure—a sense of balance without symmetry. Through April 30. (Flynn, 113 Crosby St.)

Fred Wilson—An unsubtle but extremely pithy and entertaining show of installation pieces. Wilson takes a mock-museological approach that viewers may associate with the late Marcel Broodthaers and other, younger members of the new Belgian absurdist school, such as Guillaume Bijl. The subject here, however, is race and the class system. One piece, for instance, consists of headless brown-skinned male store-window mannequins, each wearing a guard's uniform from a major New York City museum. Through April 6. (Metro Pictures, 150 Greene St.)

Allen Ginsberg

Twentieth-Century African Ladders—A small, wonderful exhibition of wood ladders made by the Dogon tribe of Mali and the Gurunsi tribe of Burkina Faso for use in their homes. The ladders look like tall wood sculptures, and make abstract figurative references to the god Nammo, who, according to Dogon cosmogony, is responsible for humankind's original descent from the heavens. Through April 6. (Thorp, 103 Prince St.)

Short List—**JAMES BIEDERMAN,** Weber, 142 Greene St. (through April 20); **ROBERT COURTRIGHT,** Gimpel, 415 West Broadway (through April 13); **MICHAEL CRAIG-MARTIN,** Nolan, 560 Broadway (through April 6); **GENE DAVIS,** Cowles, 420 W. Broadway (through April 20); **BUCKMINSTER FULLER** and **FARIBA HAJAMADI,** Burgin, 130 Prince St. (through April 6); **JOSEPH KOSUTH,** RubinSpangle, 395 West Broadway (through April 13); **GINA PANE,** Marcus, 578 Broadway (through April 6); **ED PASCHKE,** Kind, 136 Greene St. (through April 16); **JACK RISLEY,** Postmasters, 80 Greene St. (through April 6); **DEE SHAPIRO** and **MARILYN GREENBERG,** Zarre, 379 West Broadway (through April 20); **H. C. WESTERMANN,** Lennon, Weinberg, 580 Broadway (starts April 4).

PHOTOGRAPHY

"British Photography from the Thatcher Years," at the Museum of Modern Art (through April 28), is motivated by a humane and socially conscious perspective. Susan Kismaric, the curator, has chosen five photographers whose pictures comment on the quality of life in Britain for the middle and lower classes in recent years. Not surprisingly, the show succeeds where the photographers succeed, and fails when the pictures are weak.

Most of Paul Graham's pictures of Northern Ireland have been printed at superscale, but why? For art's sake, we suspect. If anything, Graham's aggrandizement of his imagery drains his shots of their meaning, and by hitting the viewer on the head takes away what power they might have had. In one of Graham's images that hasn't been so blown up, something strong happens: it's a red-and-black photo of hands praying—and it burns emotionally.

Chris Killip's black-and-white portraits of people in northern England are, as Kismaric says, "a sad poem." And John Davies captures the industrial eradication of those lovely country scenes that impassioned the Romantics. Martin Parr's color photographs have a different, less indicting tone; they're like cartoons.

We were most charged by Graham Smith's photographs of people in pubs, which were taken in Middleborough, where the photographer was born and still lives. The opposite of Brassaï's full-blooded, sexy pictures of night life in Paris in the twenties, Smith's images are very, very bleak. They have the same sense of no future that made punk rock so meaningful. In a short wall text included with the display of this work, Smith writes, "The truth might be that the camera is an extension of my drinking arm." Such a bridge between life and art honors the intention of this exhibition perfectly.

Short List—**JOHN COPLANS,** Galerie Lelong, 20 W. 57th St. (through April 20); **LEAN DEMCHICK,** Staley-Wise, 560 Broadway (through April 20); **ALLEN GINSBERG,** Sikkema, 155 Spring St. (opens at noon on Saturdays, through April 13); **EIKOH HOSOE,** Photofind, 138 Spring St. (through May 4); **LEN JENSHEL,** Laurence Miller, 138 Spring St. (through April 20); **GRACE KNOWLTON,** Witkin, 415 West Broadway (opens at noon on Saturdays, through April 6); **ROBERT LEVIN,** Borden, 560 Broadway (through April 27); **FRANK MAJORE,** Holly Solomon, 724 Fifth Ave., at 57th St. (open Mondays, through April 20); **SEBASTIÃO SALGADO,** International Center of Photography, 1130 Fifth Ave., at 94th St. (Tuesdays, noon to 8; Wednesdays through Fridays, noon to 5; Saturdays and Sundays, 11 to 6; through June 11).

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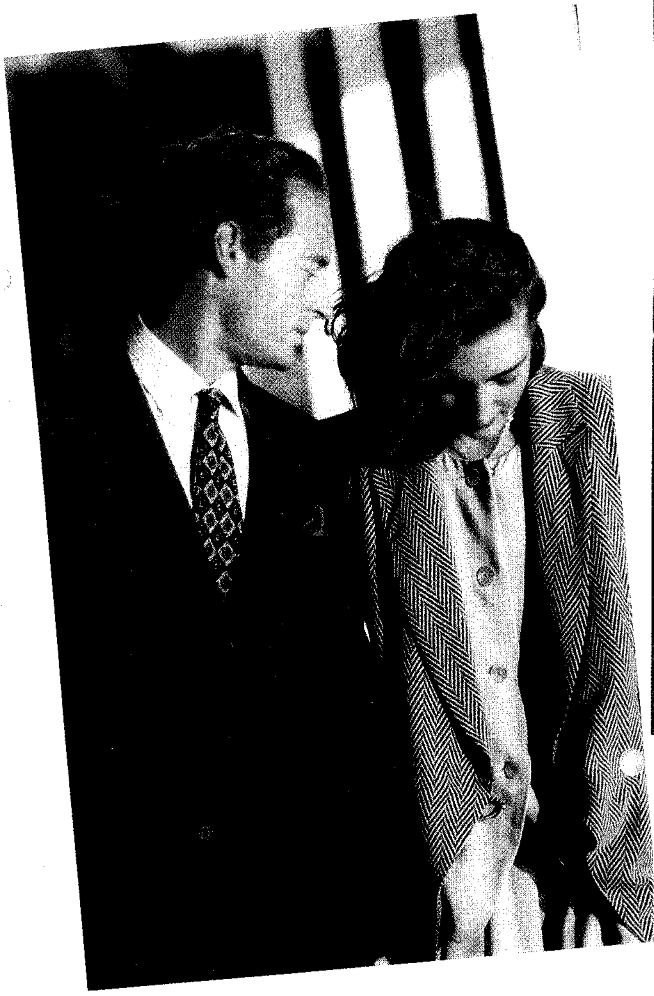

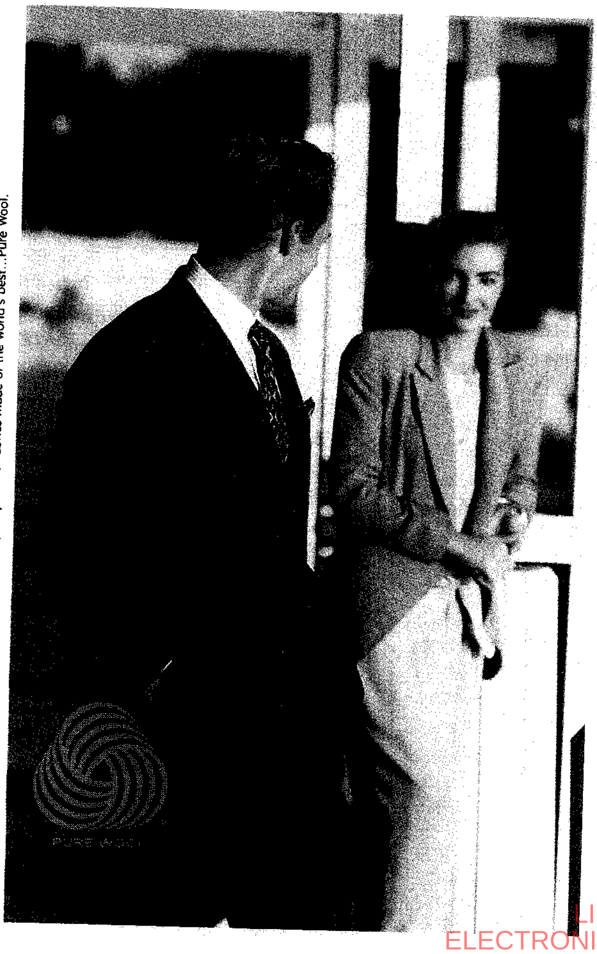

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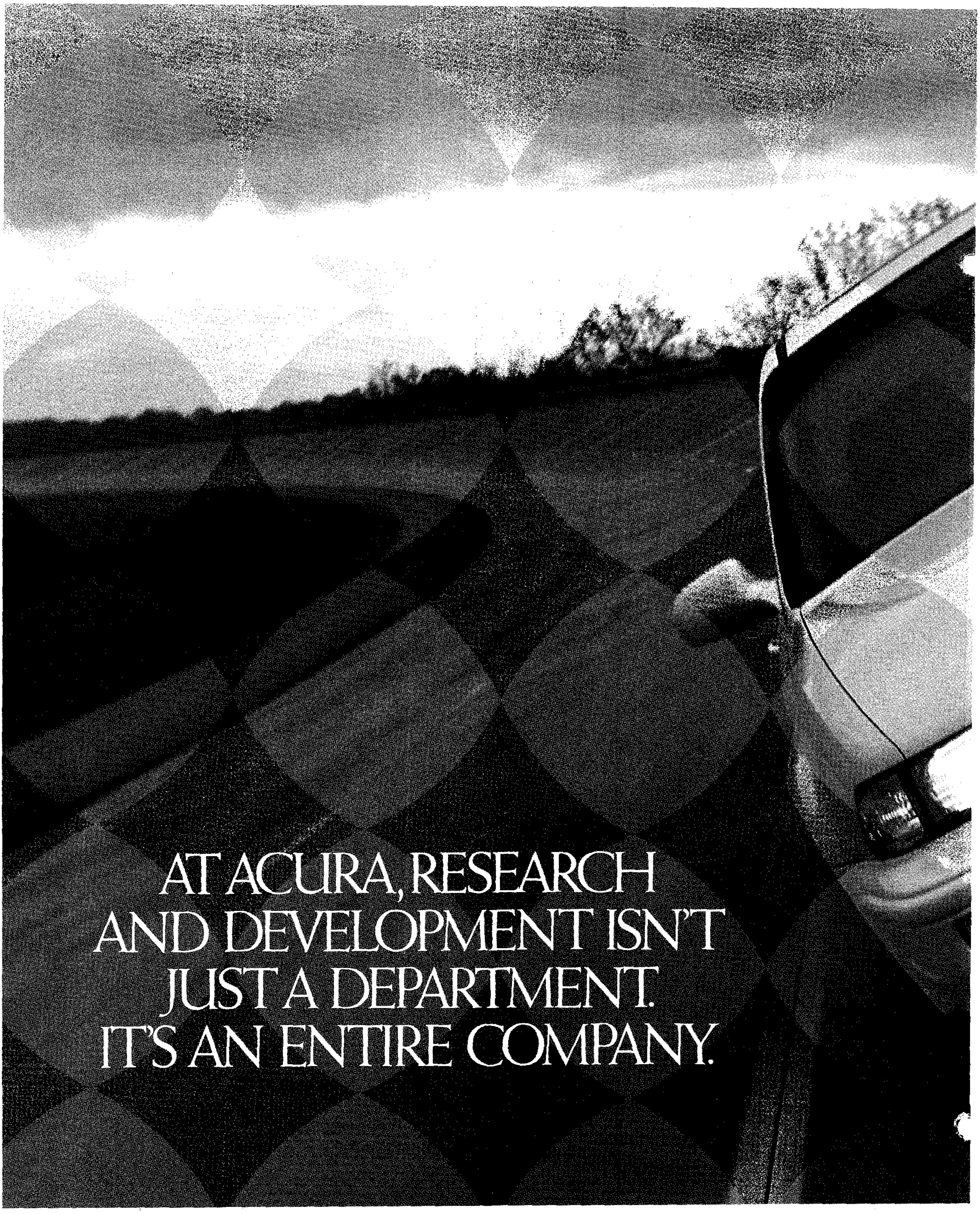

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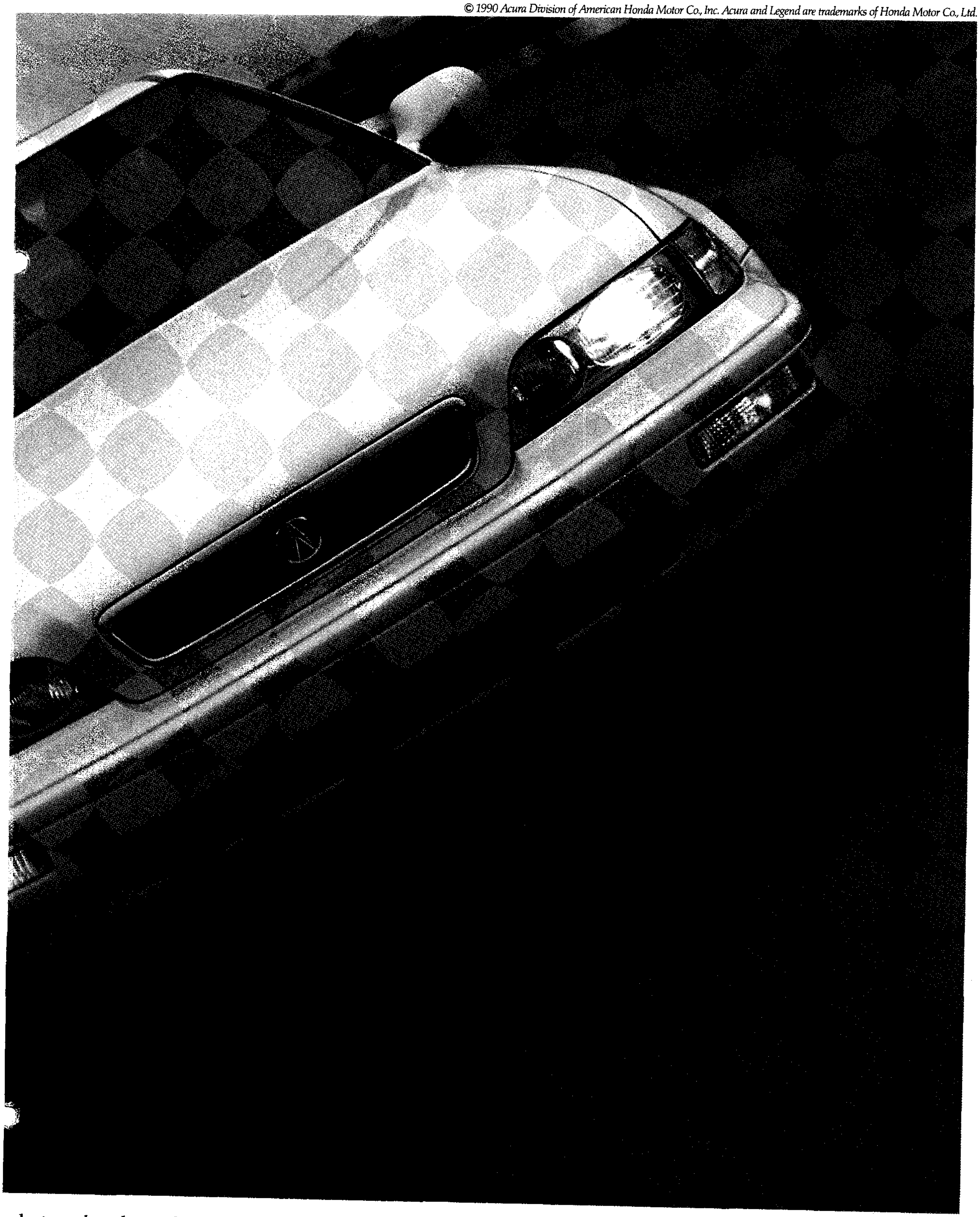

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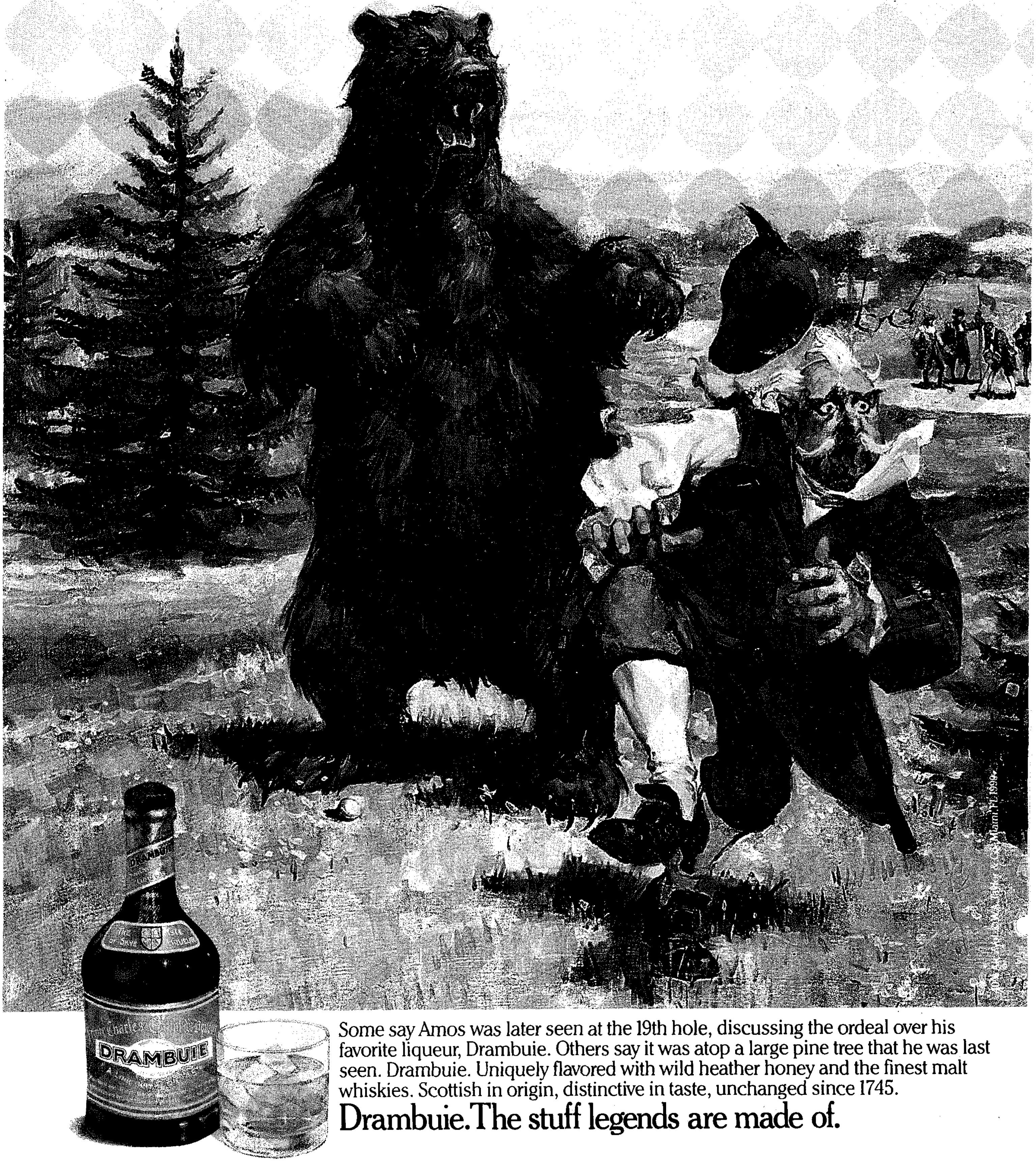
Drambuie salutes golf legend Amos Scougal, who in 1793 hit seven consecutive eagles. Unfortunately, he also hit one bear.



Some say Amos was later seen at the 19th hole, discussing the ordeal over his favorite liqueur, Drambuie. Others say it was atop a large pine tree that he was last seen. Drambuie. Uniquely flavored with wild heather honey and the finest malt whiskies. Scottish in origin, distinctive in taste, unchanged since 1745.

Drambuie. The stuff legends are made of.

MUSIC

REVIVAL movements exist to provide novelties to a public no longer content to find them principally in new music. But not just novelties for passing diversion: some of them become new classics, and prove to reward the continuous exposure, the investigation by many hands, and the variety of interpretation that have always been accorded, say, the sonatas of Beethoven or the songs of Schubert. It is not quite right to speak of Handel's oratorio "Saul" as though it were known to none before the revivalists touched it: his operas fit that description, but the best of his English oratorios have had a quiet continuing life in sound and in print. However, it seems to us that in the last decade, and especially since the great Handel tercentenary festivities, in 1985, there has been a new sense that Handel is "in the repertory," that his major works are things to be heard regularly, that each opera and oratorio is not to be checked off as "done" once a first recording appears but, rather, performed and interpreted and recorded as often as eminent artists feel they have something to contribute to it.

"Saul" is to be performed on April 6 by the Sine Nomine Singers, directed by Harry Saltzman. It is a solemn drama on the theme of corrosive envy. The moment is not inopportune for this story, which ponders the spectacle of victors after a bloody war feuding over who has been the most bellicose. The music is rich and sure, and among the soloists are several singers we have admired.

(The box-office number for the Metropolitan Opera House is 362-6000; for Avery Fisher Hall 874-2424; for Alice Tully Hall 362-1911; for Carnegie Hall 247-7800; and for Merkin Concert Hall, 129 W. 67th St., 362-8719.)

OPERA

Metropolitan Opera—**le nozze di figaro**, with Felicity Lott, Marie McLaughlin, Susan Quittmeyer, Vernon Hartman, and Samuel Ramey; conducted by James Conlon. (April 1 at 8.) . . . With Felicity Lott, Marie McLaughlin, Frederica von Stade, Andreas Schmidt, and Samuel Ramey; James Conlon. (April 5 at 8.) . . . **parsifal**, with Jessye Norman, Placido Domingo, Ekkehard Wlaschiha, Aage Haugland, and Robert Lloyd; James Levine. (April 2 at 6:30 and April 6 at 12:30.) . . . **i puritani**, with Edita Gruberova, Chris Merritt, Paolo Gavanelli, and Paul Plishka; Richard Bonynge. (April 3 at 8.) . . . With Edita Gruberova, Stanford Olsen, Paolo Gavanelli, and Paul Plishka; Richard Bonynge. (April 6 at 8.) . . . With Marina Bolgan, Stanford Olsen, Paolo Gavanelli, and Paul Plishka; Robert Duerr. (April 10 at 8.) . . . **tosca**, with Maria Guleghina, Bruno Beccaria, and James Morris; Placido Domingo. (April 4 at 8.) . . . With Maria Guleghina, Neil Shicoff, and James Morris; Placido Domingo. (April 9 at 8.) . . . **la clemenza di tito**, with Hei-Kyung Hong, Roberta Alexander, Tatiana Troyanos, Jane Bunnell, Donald Kaasch, and Julien Robbins; James Levine. (April 8 at 8.)

Musical Theatre Works—Presenting two fully staged one-act operas with music by Thomas Z. Shepard and librettos by Sheldon Harnick: "A Pig of a Molette" and "A Question of Faith." (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. 688-6022. April 2-5 and April 9-10 at 8, April 6 at 3 and 8, and April 7 at 3. Through April 13.)

"Tosca"—Riccardo Muti conducts a concert performance, featuring Carol Vaness, Giuseppe Giacomini, and Giorgio Zancanaro. With the Philadelphia Orchestra and the Westminster Symphonic Choir. (Carnegie Hall. April 2 at 8.)

Amato Opera Company—Opening performances of "Tosca" (one of three different productions of Puccini's "shabby little shocker" that New Yorkers can sample in a single week). (Amato Opera Theatre, 319 Bowery, at 2nd St. 228-8200. April 6 at 7:30 and April 7 at 2:30. Through April 21.)

John Brownlee Opera Theatre—Presenting Vittorio Giannini's rarely performed opera "The Taming of the Shrew," staged by Johnathon Pape and conducted by David Gilbert. (Manhattan School of Music, Broadway at 122nd St. 749-2802. April 10 at 8. Through April 14.)

ORCHESTRAS AND CHORUSES

New York Philharmonic—At Avery Fisher Hall. April 1 at 8: Zubin Mehta conducts symphonic music by Mozart and Strauss, as well as Saint-Saëns' Second Piano Concerto, with Yefim Bronfman. . . . ¶ April 4 at 8: Leonard Slatkin conducts an all-American program, including works by Barber, Bernstein, Schuman, Thomson, and Joan Tower. E. G. Marshall is featured as narrator in Copland's "A Lincoln Portrait."

Orchestre National de Lyon—Emmanuel Krivine conducts music by Berlioz, Ravel, and Rimsky-Korsakov; and Bruno Leonardo Gelber appears as soloist in Rachmaninoff's Third Piano Concerto. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 3 at 8.)

"Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares"

English Chamber Orchestra—Pinchas Zukerman conducting. At Carnegie Hall, April 4 at 8: The concert includes two symphonies by Haydn—No. 6 ("Le Matin") and No. 85 ("La Reine"). Also, works in which Mr. Zukerman serves as violin soloist: Bach's E-Major Violin Concerto and a Mozart adagio (K. 261) and rondo (K. 373). . . . ¶ At Avery Fisher Hall, April 7 at 3: Symphonic works by Mozart and Dvořák, both of Beethoven's Romances for Violin and Orchestra (featuring Mr. Zukerman as the solo violinist), and Hindemith's "Trauermusik" (with the conductor here taking up his viola).

Tokyo Metropolitan Symphony Orchestra—Hiroshi Wakasugi conducts Dvořák's Eighth Symphony and "Jo no Kyoku," by Minoru Miki, as well as Bartók's Viola Concerto, with soloist Nobuko Imai. (Carnegie Hall. April 5 at 8.)

Orchestra of St. Luke's—Robert Craft conducts an all-Stravinsky program: an excerpt from "Apollo," "Oedipus Rex," and the composer's late "Requiem Canticles." With the New York Choral Artists and mezzo-soprano Wendy White, tenors Jon Humphrey and David Gordon, and bass-baritones John Cheek and John Ostendorf. Paul Newman takes the Speaker's role in "Oedipus Rex." (Avery Fisher Hall. April 6 at 8.)

Juilliard Orchestra—Otto-Werner Mueller conducts Tchaikovsky's "Pathétique" Symphony, Ravel's "Alborada del Gracioso," and Brahms' Violin Concerto (with Cho-Liang Lin, a Juilliard graduate who last month was named a member of the conservatory's faculty). (Avery Fisher Hall. April 10 at 8.)

"Le Mystère des Voix Bulgares"—Bulgarian folk music performed in bracing Balkan style by the twenty-six-member Bulgarian State Radio and Television Female Vocal Choir. (Avery Fisher Hall. April 5 at 8.)

Sine Nomine Singers—Harry Saltzman directs the chorus and a baroque orchestra in Handel's "Saul." Soloists include sopranos Ann Monoyios and Catherine Aks, mezzo-soprano Mary Ann Hart, tenor Steven Tharp, and baritone Jan Opalach. (Alice Tully Hall. April 6 at 8.)

Collegiate Chorale—Robert Bass directs Brahms' "A German Requiem," with soprano Harolyn Blackwell and baritone Roger Roloff. (Carnegie Hall. April 6 at 8.)

Musica Viva Chorus—Presenting Kodály's Missa Brevis and a Palestrina motet, directed by Walter Klauss (who also performs organ solos by Bach, Brahms, and Messiaen). (All Souls Unitarian Church, Lexington Ave. at 80th St. April 7 at 3. Tickets at the door on the afternoon of the concert.)

Manhattan Philharmonic—Peter Tiboris conducts the orchestra, a chorus, and soloists in what seems to be the New York première of "Die Schuldigkeit des Ersten Gebots," a sacred drama composed by Mozart as he was turning twelve. (Alice Tully Hall. April 7 at 8.)

RECITALS

André Watts—The pianist, in a recital postponed from February 10, performs music by Chopin, Ravel, and Schubert (including his A-Major Sonata, Op. 120). (Avery Fisher Hall. April 2 at 8.)

Saturday Brass Quintet—The ensemble, which was awarded the 1990 Naumburg Chamber Music Award, plays Baroque works by Giovanni Gabrieli, Samuel Scheidt, and Bach, as well as recent compositions by Richard Danielpour, Arvo Pärt, and Stephen Paulus. (Alice Tully Hall. April 2 at 8.)

Flute Force—Flutist Julius Baker joins the flute quartet in a program that includes music by Michael Praetorius, Barber, Ravel (his "Daphnis and Chloé," transcribed for five flutes), Peter Bacchus, and Robert Dick. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 2 at 8.)

Humberto Quagliata—In his New York début program, the Uruguayan pianist presents music from Spain, including pieces by Albéniz (his Fifth Piano Sonata, as well as several shorter works), Granados, and Tomás Marco. (Weill Recital Hall, at Carnegie Hall. April 2 at 8.) . . . ¶ The complete piano works of Tomás Marco. (St. Peter's Church, Lexington Ave. at 54th St. April 8 at 7. Tickets at the door on the evening of the concert.)

Kathleen Supove—In a program ominously titled "The Exploding Piano," Ms. Supove presents four works reflecting disparate musical vocabularies prevalent in piano music of the past decade: Tod Machover's fifty-minute-long "Chansons d'Amour" (1982), Randall Woolf's "Dancetudes" (1983), Elena Firsova's Piano Sonata (1986), and Donald Martino's "Twelve Preludes" (1991). (Weill Recital Hall. April 3 at 8.)

Composers' Forum—Sopranos Joan La Barbara, Dora Ohrenstein, and Christine Schadeberg perform contemporary works by Berio, Cage, Feldman, and others. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 3 at 8.)

Bargemusic—Joseph Villa performs Mozart's C-Major Piano Sonata, K. 330, and joins a group of string players for chamber music by Beethoven and Brahms. (Fulton Ferry Landing, Brooklyn. 1-718 624-4061. April 4 at 7:30 and April 7 at 4.)

Igor Kipnis—Harpsichordist, performing works by J. C. Bach, Couperin, Handel, Scarlatti, and Mozart. (Hunter College Recital Hall, Lexington Ave. at 68th St. 772-4448. April 4 at 8.)

Pedja Muzijevic—Pianist, performing works by Haydn, Scriabin, Ravel ("Miroirs"), and Janáček (his Sonata "October 1st 1905"), as well as contemporary works. (Alice Tully Hall. April 4 at 8.)

Santa Fe Chamber Music Festival—Chamber music by Ravel, Schubert (his "Trout" Quintet), and Edgar Meyer, performed by violinist James Buswell, violist Martha Strongin Katz, cellist Carter Brey, pianist Christopher O'Riley, and Mr. Meyer (who plays the double bass). (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 5 at 8.)

MUSIC—Cont'd

Loretta O'Sullivan and David Breitman—The cellist and the fortepianist give period-instrument performances of sonatas and variations by Beethoven. (St. Michael's Church, Amsterdam Ave. at 99th St. April 5 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

Juilliard Contemporary Music Ensemble—Christopher Kendall conducts works by Bruce MacCombie, Nathan Currier, and Stephen Albert. (Alice Tully Hall. April 5 at 8.)

Paula Robison—The flutist, assisted by a large chamber ensemble, performs Baroque concertos in the grand setting of the Temple of Dendur. (Metropolitan Museum, Fifth Ave. at 83rd St. 570-3949. April 6 at 8.)

Yale Chamber Music Series—A program of chamber music by Schubert, Prokofiev, and Schumann (his Piano Quartet in E-Flat, with pianist Peter Frankl). (Merkin Concert Hall. April 6 at 8:30.)

Christina Kiss—The pianist's all-Liszt program includes a helping of Hungarian Rhapsodies, the "Grand Galop Chromatique," and paraphrases of Verdi's "Rigoletto" and Wagner's "Rienzi." (Weill Recital Hall. April 6 at 8:30.)

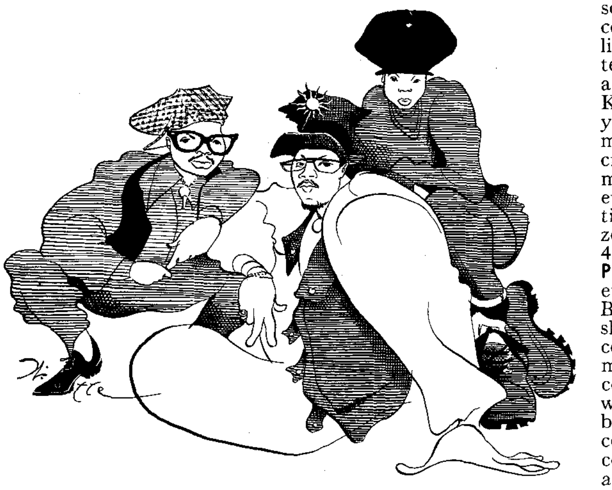
Mitsuko Uchida—The pianist continues her Mozart survey, performing the Sonatas in C Major (K. 545) and F Major (K. 533/494), as well as the C-Minor Fantasia (K. 475) and the C-Minor Sonata (K. 457). (Alice Tully Hall. April 7 at 3.)

Jubal Trio—Soprano Christine Schadeberg, flutist Sue Ann Kahn, and harpist Susan Jolles present chamber works ranging from Stephen Foster to arrangements of Chopin's songs. (Kosciuszko Foundation, 15 E. 65th St. 734-2130. April 7 at 3.)

Orion String Quartet—Playing music by Beethoven, Schumann, and Kirchner. (Frick Collection, 1 E. 70th St. 288-0700. April 7 at 5.)

Jeni Slotchiver—In her New York début recital, the pianist performs sonatas by Beethoven and Ginastera; compositions by Liszt, Debussy, and Busoni (including his Sixth Sonatina, a fantasy on Bizet's "Carmen"); and the première of "Crossfire," by the Turkish composer Deniz Ulben. (Weill Recital Hall. April 7 at 5:30.)

Alfred Brendel—The Austrian pianist, a resident of London for the past two decades, performs Haydn's Sonata No. 20 in C Minor, Schumann's "Symphonic Études," and two works by Beethoven: his F-Major Variations, Op. 34, and his Sonata in A-Flat, Op. 110. (Carnegie Hall. April 8 at 8.)



Bell Biv DeVoe

Chelsea Chamber Ensemble—Performing chamber music by Mozart, Debussy, and Beethoven (his Quintet for Piano and Winds, with pianist Ruth Laredo). (Weill Recital Hall. April 8 at 8.)

New York Baroque Consort—A modern-instrument early-music group performs Baroque arias and chamber music, as well as selections from the Cantigas de Santa María, a thirteenth-century song collection compiled by the Spanish King Alfonso the Wise. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 9 at 2.)

Diane Taublieb—The flutist, assisted by various artists, performs works by Barber, Debussy, Steven Mackey, Jay Anthony Gach, and others. (Christ and St. Stephen's Church, 120 W. 69th St. April 9 at 8. Tickets at the door on the night of the concert.)

VineyardMusicke—The period-instrument chamber ensemble presents music from the court of Charles II, by Henry Lawes, Tobias Hume, John Blow, and Purcell. (Vineyard Theatre, 108 E. 15th St. 353-3874. April 9 at 8.)

Duane Hulbert—Pianist, performing sonatas by Clementi and Glazunov, Grieg's "Lyric Pieces," and Stravinsky's "Three Movements from Petrouchka." (Merkin Concert Hall. April 9 at 8.)

New Music for Young Ensembles—Presenting chamber music by Joelle Wallach, Ronn Yedidia, and John Corigliano (the New York première of his "Voyage," for flute and strings). With soprano Marni Nixon, flutist Eleanor Lawrence, the Arioso Trio, and the Meridian String Quartet. (Weill Recital Hall. April 9 at 8.)

Alicia de Larrocha—The pianist performs two Mozart sonatas (K. 282 and K. 576) and selections from Granados's "Goyescas." (Carnegie Hall. April 10 at 8.)

Cleveland String Quartet—Performing three Beethoven quartets (Op. 18, No. 3; Op. 95; and Op. 135, his last complete work) on a matched set of Stradivarius instruments once owned by Paganini. (Miller Theatre, Columbia University, Broadway at 116th St. 854-7799. April 10 at 8.)

Alexander String Quartet—Performing music by Bach, Schubert, and Janáček, with flutist Eugenia Zukerman and cellist Sadao Harada. (Alice Tully Hall. April 10 at 8.)

Mendelssohn String Quartet—Performing three Mozart quartets: K. 428, K. 465 (the "Dissonant"), and K. 575. (Merkin Concert Hall. April 10 at 8.)

JAZZ/POP/ROCK PERSONAL APPEARANCES

Bell Biv DeVoe / Keith Sweat / Johnny Gill—This "Triple Threat Tour" is a showcase for the New York-Boston axis of the new-jack-swing / hip-hop sound, and these pop confectioners will attract a big crowd of urban teen-age candy lovers. Ricky Bell, Michael Bivins, and Ronnie DeVoe, along with Johnny Gill (the solo opening act), are all veterans of the Roxbury bubble-gum-soul group New Edition, whose most famous alumnus is new-jack exemplar Bobby Brown. "Poison," Bell Biv DeVoe's début album, has sold more than three million copies, and it will be performed live with a booming sound system, flashbulb-popping lights, and lots of frenetic dancing. Keith Sweat, a twenty-nine-year-old native of Harlem, is more of a traditional R. & B. crooner, but he'll be able to move the homeboys and girls, even though he is, in this setting, practically a senior citizen. (Madison Square Garden. 465-6000. April 8 at 8.)

Pet Shop Boys—It's billed as an evening with the Pet Shop Boys, but it's more of a stage show than a performance concert. There is no band, and almost everything is on tape, computer-generated. But there will be lots of backup singers, beautiful dancing boys, more costume changes than at a Cher concert, and, at the center of it all, the man who's raised ennui to a Pop art form, Neil Tennant. He and his button-pushing partner, Chris Lowe, construct electronic washes with catchy choruses, and they have come up with achingly romantic gems ("Rent") and even the occasional cynical-social-observation-you-can-dance-to ("Opportunities"). Their latest album, "Behavior," is a perfect pop record—smart, emphatically confessional, and brilliantly arranged. The new single is hilarious; it's an electronic disco fantasy medley of U2's classic "Where the Streets Have No Name" and Frankie Valli's eternal "Can't Take My Eyes off of You." Postpostmodern madness, and never boring, this show could be the silliest extravaganza New York has seen since the glory days of the Tubes. (Radio City Music Hall, Sixth Ave. at 50th St. 247-4777. April 9-10 at 8.)

Jazz Concert—Don Cherry, Geri Allen, Dewey Redman, and Jerry Gonzalez & the Fort Apache Band. (Town Hall, 123 W. 43rd St. 840-2824. April 5 at 8.)

New York City Gay Men's Chorus—Carnegie Hall. 247-7800. April 7 at 8.

SPORTS

HOME TEAMS

Knicks—Vs. the Chicago Bulls, April 4 . . . ¶ Vs. the Detroit Pistons, April 6. (Game time, 8:30.)

Nets—Vs. the Boston Celtics, April 2 at 7:30.

Mets—Vs. the Philadelphia Phillies, April 8 (opening day) at 3:10, April 9 at 1:40, and April 10 at 7:40.

Yankees—Away until April 15, when they face the Chicago White Sox.

(The Knicks play at Madison Square Garden, 465-6000; the Nets at the Meadowlands Arena, 1-201 935-3900; and the Mets at Shea Stadium, 1-718 507-8499.)

RACING

Horses—At Aqueduct: Daily, except April 9, at 1. . . . **trotting** at Yonkers Raceway: Weeknights at 8, and April 9 at 1. . . . ¶ At the Meadowlands: Weeknights at 7:30.

CHAMPIONSHIP—HOCKEY

Stanley Cup Playoffs—The Patrick Division Playoffs start April 3, and the Rangers are definitely in.

ABOVE AND BEYOND

Flower Days—When he wandered lonely as a cloud, Wordsworth saw "a crowd, / A host, of golden daffodils." Local poets and other wandering romantics will find such a host at the New York Botanical Garden, in Bronx Park. (April 6-7, from 10 to 7.)

Bauhaus—An exhibition opening April 8 at Cooper Union, in which the roots of the architectural movement are revealed to have been in turn-of-the-century kindergarten design. The show features nineteenth-century toys and playground equipment and runs through May 11. (Herb Lubalin Study Center of Design and Typography, 7 E. 7th St. Open Mondays through Fridays, noon to 7, and Saturdays, noon to 5. No tickets necessary.)

Readings—April 2 at 6: Judith Ortiz Cofer, Brenda Marie Osbey, and Elaine Terranova read from their own poetry. (Donnell Library Auditorium, 20 W. 53rd St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 4 at 7: Thulani Davis, Houston Baker, Reginald McKnight, and others read from their own works. The reading will be followed by a discussion. (New-York Historical Society, 170 Central Park W., at 77th St. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 4 at 7: Joseph Brodsky, John Hollander, Edward Mendelson, Paul Muldoon, and Mary Jo Salter read from the poems of W. H. Auden. (National Arts Club, 15 Gramercy Park S. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ April 8 at 8: Philip Levine and Linda Bierds read from their own poetry. (92nd Street Y, Lexington Ave. at 92nd St. 415-5440.) . . . ¶ April 8 at 8: Susan Brownmiller and Paula Giddings read from their own one-act plays. (Ethical Culture Society, 2 W. 64th St. Tickets at the door on the night of the reading.) . . . ¶ April 10 at 6:30: Gloria Foster, Ted Marcoux, John Mahoney, Ron Nakahara, and Natsuko Ohama read works by Bessie Head, Rick Bass, W. P. Kinsella, and Yasunari Kawabata. (Symphony Space, Broadway at 95th St. 864-5400.)

Talks—April 2 at 7:30: Twyla Tharp talks about her work. (City Center, 130 W. 56th St., fourth floor. For information about tickets, call 581-7907.) . . . ¶ April 2 at 8: Harlan Lane and Oliver Sacks talk about deafness. (Loeb Student Center Auditorium, New York University, Washington Sq. and LaGuardia Pl. No tickets necessary.) . . . ¶ April 7 at 2: Phillip Lopate talks about writing and walking. (Urban Center, 457 Madison Ave., at 51st St. For reservations, call 935-3960.) . . . ¶ April 8 at 6: Meg Greenfield, editorial-page editor of the Washington *Post*, talks about political analysis. (New York Public Library, Fifth Ave. at 42nd St. For information about tickets, call 930-0571.) . . . ¶ April 9 at 8: Elie Wiesel on "What Ancient Masters Could Teach Our Generation." (Hunter College Assembly Hall, Park Ave. at 69th St. April 9 at 8. No tickets necessary.)

Memorandum—The Sanford Smith "Works on Paper" show will be at the 7th Regiment Armory, Park Ave. at 66th St. Open April 5-6, from 11 to 8, and April 7, from 11 to 7. For more information, call 777-5218.

GOINGS ON ABOUT TOWN

THE MOVIE HOUSES

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FILMS ACCOMPANIED BY A DAGGER ARE DESCRIBED IN THE "IN BRIEF" SECTION, STARTING ON PAGE 26.

EAST SIDE

Angelika Film Center, 18 W. Houston St. (995-2000)
Theatre 1: Through April 4: "City Zero" (directed by Karen Shakhnazarov). From April 5: "Poison" (Todd Haynes).
Theatre 2: "The Comfort of Strangers" (†).
Theatre 3: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 4: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (Michael Pressman).
Theatre 5: (Separate admissions) "Iron & Silk" (Shirley Sun), with Mark Salzman; and "Ay Carmela!" (Carlos Saura; in Spanish), with Carmen Maura and Andrés Pajares.
Theatre 6: "Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French), with Gérard Depardieu.

Public Theatre, 425 Lafayette St. (598-7171)
April 1: Theatre closed.
April 2: (Separate admissions) "Patty Hearst" (1988, Paul Schrader), with Natasha Richardson; and "Hardcore" (1979, Schrader), with George C. Scott, Season Hubley, and Peter Boyle.
April 3: (Separate admissions) "Patty Hearst"; and "Raging Bull" (1980, Martin Scorsese), with Robert De Niro, Cathy Moriarty, and Joe Pesci.
April 4: "Patty Hearst"; and "Taxi Driver" (†).
From April 5: "The Comedian Harmonists"; (1976, Eberhard Fechner; in German), a documentary.

Movieland 8th Street Triplex, 36 E. 8th. (477-6600)
Theatre 1: "The Doors" (†).
Theatre 2: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).
Theatre 3: "Dances with Wolves" (†).

Cinema 12, 22 E. 12th. (924-3363)
"The Vanishing" (†).

Village East Cinemas, 2nd Ave. at 12th. (529-6799)
Theatre 1: "Julia Has Two Lovers" (Bashar Shbib), with Daphna Kastner.
Theatre 2: "Fantasia" (1940), a Walt Disney animated film.
Theatre 3: "Superstar: The Life and Times of Andy Warhol" (Chuck Workman), a documentary.
Theatre 4: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (†).
Theatre 5: "The Field" (Jim Sheridan), with Richard Harris, John Hurt, Tom Berenger, Brenda Fricker, and Sean Bean.
Theatre 6: "The British Animation Invasion," twenty-five short films.
Theatre 7: "American Blue Note" (Ralph Toporoff), with Peter MacNicol.

Loews 19th Street East 6, B'way at 19th. (260-8000)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "Dances with Wolves" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 4: Through April 4: "The Perfect Weapon" (Mark DiSalle), with Jeffrey Speakman. From April 5: "The Marrying Man" (Jerry Rees), with Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger.
Theatre 5: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (Michael Pressman).
Theatre 6: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).

Gramercy, Lexington at 23rd. (475-1660)
"GoodFellas" (†).

Bay Cinema, 2nd Ave. at 32nd. (679-0160)
"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (Michael Pressman).

Murray Hill Cinemas, 160 E. 34th. (689-6548)
Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Long Walk Home" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Field" (Jim Sheridan), with Richard Harris, John Hurt, Tom Berenger, Brenda Fricker, and Sean Bean.
Theatre 4: "Class Action" (†).

Loews 34th Street Showplace, 238 E. 34th. (532-5544)
Theatre 1: Through April 4: "Warlock" (Steve Miner), with Julian Sands. From April 5: "The Marrying Man" (Jerry Rees), with Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger.
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).

34th St. East, 241 E. 34th. (683-0255)
"Career Opportunities" (Bryan Gordon), with Frank Whaley.

Eastside Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 55th. (755-3020)
"Reversal of Fortune" (†).

Sutton I and 2, 3rd Ave. at 57th. (759-1411)
Theatre 1: Through April 4: "The Grifters" (†). From April 5: "The Marrying Man" (Jerry Rees), with Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger.
Theatre 2: "The Long Walk Home" (†).

Gotham Cinema, 3rd Ave. at 58th. (759-2262)
"Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).

Plaza, 42 E. 58th. (355-3320)
"Cyrano de Bergerac" (Jean-Paul Rappeneau, in French), with Gérard Depardieu.

Manhattan Twin, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (935-6420)
Theatre 1: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).

59th Street East Cinema, 239 E. 59th. (759-4630)
"Career Opportunities" (Bryan Gordon).

Baronet and Coronet, 3rd Ave. at 59th. (355-1663)
Theatre 1: "The Hard Way" (†).
Theatre 2: "Class Action" (†).

Cinema I, Cinema II, and Cinema 3rd Avenue, 3rd Ave. at 60th. (753-6022)
Theatre 1: "Defending Your Life" (Albert Brooks), with Brooks, Meryl Streep, Rip Torn, Lee Grant, and Buck Henry.
Theatre 2: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).
Theatre 3: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (†).

Gemini I and 2, 2nd Ave. at 64th. (832-1670)
Theatre 1: "The Doors" (†).
Theatre 2: "GoodFellas" (†).

Beekman, 2nd Ave. at 66th. (737-2622)
"True Colors" (Herbert Ross), with John Cusack and James Spader.

Loews New York Twin, 2nd Ave. at 67th. (744-7339)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (Michael Pressman).

68th St. Playhouse, 3rd Ave. at 68th. (734-0302)
Through April 4: "Hamlet" (Franco Zeffirelli), with Mel Gibson.
From April 5: "Cross My Heart" (Jacques Fansten; in French).

Loews Tower East, 3rd Ave. at 71st. (879-1313)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

U. A. East, 1st Ave. at 85th. (249-5100)
"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (Michael Pressman).

Park & 86th Street Cinemas, 125 E. 86th. (534-1880)
Theatre 1: "The Hard Way" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).

86th Street East Twin, 3rd Ave. at 86th. (249-1144)
Theatre 1: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 4: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†). From April 5: "The Marrying Man" (Jerry Rees), with Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger.

WEST SIDE

Film Forum, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)
Theatre 1: Through April 9: "L'Ange" (1982, directed by Patrick Bokanowski) and "Rehearsals from Extinct Anatomies" (1988, the Brothers Quay). From April 10: "Echoes of Conflict" (1989, Jorge Johanan Weller; in Hebrew).
Theatre 2: See listings under Revival Houses.
Theatre 3: "Paris Is Burning" (†).

Waverly I and 2, 6th Ave. at 3rd. (929-8037)
Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).

8th St. Playhouse, 52 W. 8th. (674-6515)
"Guilty by Suspicion" (†).

Art Greenwich Twin, Greenwich Ave. at 12th. (929-3350)
Theatre 1: "Class Action" (†).
Theatre 2: "Career Opportunities" (Bryan Gordon), with Frank Whaley.

Quad Cinema, 34 W. 13th. (255-8800)
Theatre 1: "The Long Walk Home" (†).
Theatre 2: Through April 4: "Hamlet" (Franco Zeffirelli), with Mel Gibson. From April 5: "The Marrying Man" (Jerry Rees), with Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger.
Theatre 3: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 4: "Reversal of Fortune" (†).

Chelsea Cinemas, 260 W. 23rd. (691-4744)
Theatre 1: "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (†).
Theatre 2: "Career Opportunities" (Bryan Gordon), with Frank Whaley.
Theatre 3: "The Hard Way" (†).
Theatre 4: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).
Theatre 5: "Class Action" (†).
Theatre 6: "Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.
Theatre 7: "The Grifters" (†).
Theatre 8: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 9: "Warlock" (Steve Miner).

23rd St. West Triplex, 333 W. 23rd. (989-0060)
Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).
Theatre 3: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).

Guild, 33 W. 50th. (757-2406)
Through April 4: "Fantasia" (1940), a Walt Disney animated film.
From April 5: "The Marrying Man" (Jerry Rees), with Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger.

Worldwide Cinemas, 50th St. between 8th and 9th Aves. (246-1583)
Theatre 1: "The Long Walk Home" (†).
Theatre 2: "The Hard Way" (†).
Theatre 3: "Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.
Theatre 4: (Separate admissions) "Mr. & Mrs. Bridge" (†); and "The Grifters" (†).
Theatre 5: "Home Alone" (Chris Columbus), with Macaulay Culkin.
Theatre 6: "Career Opportunities" (Bryan Gordon), with Frank Whaley.

Ziegfeld, 141 W. 54th. (765-7600)
"The Doors" (†).

Loews Festival, 6 W. 57th. (307-7856)
"The Godfather Part III" (Francis Ford Coppola), with Al Pacino.

57th St. Playhouse, 110 W. 57th. (581-7360)
"Mister Johnson" (†).

Carnegie Hall Cinemas, 7th Ave. between 56th and 57th. (265-2520)
Theatre 1: "La Femme Nikita" (†).
Theatre 2: "Iron & Silk" (Shirley Sun).

Loews Fine Arts, 4 W. 58th. (980-5656)
"Alice" (†).

Cinema 3, 2 W. 59th. (752-5959)
"Misery" (Rob Reiner), with James Caan and Kathy Bates.

Loews Paramount, B'way at 61st. (247-5070)
"Dances with Wolves" (†).

62nd & Broadway, 62 W. 62nd. (265-7466)
"Class Action" (†).

Lincoln Plaza I, 2, and 3, B'way at 63rd. (757-2280)
Theatre 1: "The Nasty Girl" (Michael Verhoeven, in German), with Lena Stolze.
Theatre 2: "Open Doors" (†).
Theatre 3: "Ju Dou" (†).

Regency, B'way at 67th. (724-3700)
"The Hard Way" (†).

Loews 84th Street Sixplex, B'way at 84th. (877-3600)
Theatre 1: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).
Theatre 2: "Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze."
Theatre 3: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Perfect Weapon" (Mark DiSalle), with Jeffrey Speakman.
Theatre 5: Through April 4: "Warlock" (Steve Miner), with Julian Sands. From April 5: "The Marrying Man" (Jerry Rees), with Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger.
Theatre 6: "The Doors" (†).

Metro Cinema I and 2, B'way at 99th. (222-1200)
Theatre 1: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).
Theatre 2: "Career Opportunities" (Bryan Gordon), with Frank Whaley.

Olympia I and II, B'way at 107th. (865-8128)
Theatre 1: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

TIMES SQUARE AREA

Criterion Center, B'way at 44th. (354-0900)
Theatre 1: "If Looks Could Kill" (directed by William Dear), with Richard Grieco.
Theatre 2: "The Hard Way" (†).
Theatre 3: "Guilty by Suspicion" (†).
Theatre 4: "The Five Heartbeats" (†).
Theatre 5: "GoodFellas" (†).
Theatre 6: "Sleeping with the Enemy" (†).

MOVIE HOUSES–Cont'd

EMBASSY 1, B'way at 46th. (302-0494)

Through April 4: "The Perfect Weapon" (Mark DiSalle), with Jeffrey Speakman.

From April 5: "Dances with Wolves" (†).

EMBASSY 2, 3, AND 4, 7th Ave. at 47th. (730-7262)

Theatre 1: "The Silence of the Lambs" (†).

Theatre 2: "The Godfather Part III" (Francis Ford Coppola), with Al Pacino, Andy Garcia, Diane Keaton, and Talia Shire.

Theatre 3: Through April 4: "Ghost" (†). From April 5: "Perfect Weapon" (Mark DiSalle), with Jeffrey Speakman.

LOEWS ASTOR PLAZA, 44th St. at B'way. (869-8340)

"Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles II: The Secret of the Ooze" (Michael Pressman).

NATIONAL TWIN, B'way at 44th. (869-0950)

Theatre 1: "Warlock" (Steve Miner), with Julian Sands.

Theatre 2: "Class Action" (†).

WEST SIDE CINEMA 1 AND 2, 7th Ave. at 48th. (398-1720)

Theatre 1: "New Jack City" (†).

Theatre 2: "New Jack City" (†).

REVIVAL HOUSES

BIOGRAPH CINEMA, 225 W. 57th. (582-4582)

April 1: "Les Liaisons Dangereuses" (1959, directed by Roger Vadim; in French), with Jeanne Moreau and Gérard Philipe; and "The Story of Adèle H." (1975, François Truffaut; in French), with Isabelle Adjani.

April 2-3: "The Adolescent" (1979, Jeanne Moreau; in French), with Simone Signoret; and "The Slap" (1974, Claude Pinoteau; in French), with Lino Ventura, Annie Girardot, and Isabelle Adjani.

April 4-6: "Babette's Feast" (1988, Gabriel Axel; in Danish and French), with Stéphane Audran, Jean-Philippe Lafort, Gudmar Wivesson, Jarl Kulle, and Bibi Andersson; and "The Return of Martin Guerre" (1983, Daniel Vigne; in French), with Gérard Depardieu and Nathalie Baye.

Alec Baldwin and Kim Basinger in "The Marrying Man"

April 7-8: "The Last Metro" (1981, François Truffaut; in French), with Catherine Deneuve, Gérard Depardieu, and Jean Poiret; and "Scene of the Crime" (†).

April 9-10: "Le Chat" (1971, Pierre Granier-Deferre; in French), with Jean Gabin and Simone Signoret; and "The Widow Couderc" (1974, Granier-Deferre; in French), with Alain Delon and Signoret.

CINEMA VILLAGE, 3rd Ave. between 12th and 13th. (505-7320)

Through April 2: "The Icicle Thief" (1990, Maurizio Nichetti; in Italian), with Nichetti; and "My Twentieth Century" (1990, Ildiko Enyedi; in Hungarian).

April 3-6: "Henry & June" (1990, Phillip Kaufman), with Fred Ward, Maria de Medeiros, and Uma Thurman; and "Tropic of Cancer" (1970, Joseph Strick), with Rip Torn.

April 7-9: "Metropolitan" (1990, Whit Stillman), with Edward Clements, Carolyn Farina, Christopher Eigeman, and Taylor Nichols; and "Pump Up the Volume" (Allan Moyle), with Christian Slater, Scott Paulin, Ellen Greene, and Samantha Mathis.

From April 10: "Freeze—Die—Come to Life" (Vitaly Kanevski; in Russian); and "The Pathfinder" (1989, Nils Gaup).

FILM FORUM 2, 209 W. Houston St. (727-8110)

Through April 2: "Twilight of the Cockroaches" (1987, Hiroaki Yoshida), an animated film.

April 3-4: "Castle of Cagliostro" (1979, Hayao Miyazaki), and "Warriors of the Wind" (1984, Miyazaki), animated films.

From April 5: "Tabu" (†); and "Chang" (1927, Merian C. Cooper and Ernest B. Schoedsack).

THEATRE 80 ST. MARKS, 80 St. Marks Pl. (254-7400)

April 1: "Through a Glass Darkly" (1962, Ingmar Bergman; in Swedish), with Harriet Andersson, Gunnar Björnstrand, Max von Sydow, and Lars Passgård; and "The Silence" (1964, Bergman; in Swedish), with Ingrid Thulin and Gunnel Lindblom.

April 2: "A Fistful of Dollars" (1967, Sergio Leone), with Clint Eastwood; and "The Good, the Bad and the Ugly" (1966, Leone), with Eastwood.

April 3: "The Lion in Winter" (1968, Anthony Harvey), with Peter O'Toole, Katharine Hepburn, and Anthony Hopkins.

April 4: "North by Northwest" (1959, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Eva Marie Saint, James Mason, Leo G. Carroll, Jessie Royce Landis, and Martin Landau; and "I Confess" (1953, Hitchcock), with Montgomery Clift, Anne Baxter, Karl Malden, and Brian Aherne.

April 5-6: "Dinner at Eight" (1933, George Cukor), with Jean Harlow, Marie Dressler, and John Barrymore; and "The Women" (1939, Cukor), with Norma Shearer.

April 7: "The Man Who Knew Too Much" (†); and "Secret Agent" (1936, Alfred Hitchcock), with John Gielgud, Peter Lorre, Madeleine Carroll, and Robert Young.

April 8: "La Grande Illusion" (1937, Jean Renoir; in French); and "La Bête Humaine" (1938, Jean Renoir; in French). April 9: "The Lodger" (1944, John Brahm), with Merle Oberon, Laird Cregar, George Sanders, and Cedric Hardwicke; and "Hangover Square" (1945, Brahm), with Cregar and Linda Darnell.

April 10: "The Sun Also Rises" (1957, Henry King), with Tyrone Power, Ava Gardner, Errol Flynn, Mel Ferrer, and Eddie Albert; and "The Snows of Kilimanjaro" (1952, King), with Gregory Peck, Susan Hayward, and Ava Gardner.

FILM LIBRARIES, ETC.

MUSEUM OF MODERN ART, Roy and Niuta Titus Theatres, 11 W. 53rd St. (708-9490)—April 1 at 2:30: "In Which We Serve" (1942, directed by Noël Coward and David Lean), with Coward, John Mills, and Bernard Miles. . . . ¶ April 1 at 3: "Reveille" (1917, Georg af Klercker; a Swedish silent film). . . . ¶ April 1 at 6: "Since You Went Away" (1944, John Cromwell), with Claudette Colbert, Jennifer Jones, and Joseph Cotten. . . . ¶ April 1 at 6: "Gypsy Love" (1916) and "Prisoner of Karlsten's Fortress" (1916), both Swedish silent films, by af Klercker. . . . ¶ April 2 at 2:30: "Since You Went Away." . . . ¶ April 2 at 3: "Calle's New Underclothes" (1916) and "The Daughter of the Lighthousekeeper" (1918), both Swedish silent films, by af Klercker. . . . ¶ April 2 at 6: "The Grapes of Wrath" (1940, John Ford), with Henry Fonda, Jane Darwell, and John Carradine. . . . ¶ April 2 at 6: "Mother-in-Law Goes Out" (1916) and "Love's Victory" (1916), both Swedish silent films by af Klercker. . . . ¶ April 4 at 2:30: "The Grapes of Wrath." . . . ¶ April 4 at 3 and 6: "When Hamlet Came to Mizoram" (1989, Pankaj Butalia), a documentary. . . . ¶ April 4 at 6: "In Which We Serve." . . . ¶ April 5 at 2:30: "Strangers in the House" (†) . . . ¶ April 5 at 3: "Mother-in-Law Goes Out" and "Love's Victory." . . . ¶ April 5 at 6: "Notorious" (1946, Alfred Hitchcock), with Ingrid Bergman, Cary Grant, and Claude Rains. . . . ¶ April 5 at 6: "In the Claws of Darkness" (1917) and "The Town Priest" (1917), both Swedish silent films by af Klercker. . . . ¶ April 6 at 2: "Louisiana Story" (1948, Robert Flaherty), a documentary. . . . ¶ April 6 at 2:30: "The Mysterious Night of the 25th" (1916) and "The Nobel Laureate" (1918), both Swedish silent films by af Klercker. . . . ¶ April 6 at 5: "Laura" (1944, Otto Preminger), with Gene Tierney, Dana Andrews, and Clifton Webb. . . . ¶ April 6 at 5 and April 7 at 2:30: "Calle's New Underclothes" and "The Daughter of the Lighthousekeeper." . . . ¶ April 7 at 2: "Meet Me in St. Louis" (1944, Vincente Minnelli), with Judy Garland, Margaret O'Brien, and Lucille Bremer. . . . ¶ April 7 at 5: "Strangers in the House" (†). . . . ¶ April 7 at 5: "Reveille." . . . ¶ April 8 at 2:30: "Notorious." . . . ¶ April 8 at 6: "To Be or Not to Be" (1942, Ernst Lubitsch), with Jack Benny, Carole Lombard, and Robert Stack. . . . ¶ April 8 at 6:30: A program of films by Leighton Pierce, who will be present. . . . ¶ April 9 at noon: "The Sterile Cuckoo" (1969, Alan J. Pakula), with Liza Minnelli and Wendell Burton. . . . ¶ April 9 at 2:30: "Cabaret" (1972, Bob Fosse), with Liza Minnelli, Michael York, and Joel Grey. . . . ¶ April 9 at 3: "In the Claws of Darkness" and "The Town Priest." . . . ¶ April 9 at 6: "New York, New York" (1977, Martin Scorsese), with Liza Minnelli and Robert De Niro. . . . ¶ April 9 at 6: "The Mysterious Night of the 25th" and "The Nobel Laureate."

MUSEUM OF BROADCASTING, 1 E. 53rd St. (752-7684)—"On Stage at Carnegie Hall: A Centennial Celebration." April 2-6: "A Viennese Gala in Carnegie Hall" (1980, Bravo), with the Tonkuenstler Orchestra. . . . From April 9: "Count Basie" (1981, CBS Cable), with George Benson, Sarah Vaughn, Tony Bennett, and Joe Williams. Showings Tuesdays at 2:30 and 5:30 and Wednesdays through Saturdays at 2:30. . . . ¶ "A Salute to Monty Python." April 2-6: Episodes 11-15 of "Monty Python's Flying Circus," with Graham Chapman, John Cleese, Terry Gilliam, Eric Idle, Terry Jones, and Michael Palin. . . . From April 9: Episodes 16-20 of "Monty Python's Flying Circus." Showings Tuesdays at 12:15, 2:30, and 5:30; Wednesdays through Fridays at 12:15 and 2:30; and Saturdays at 12:15.

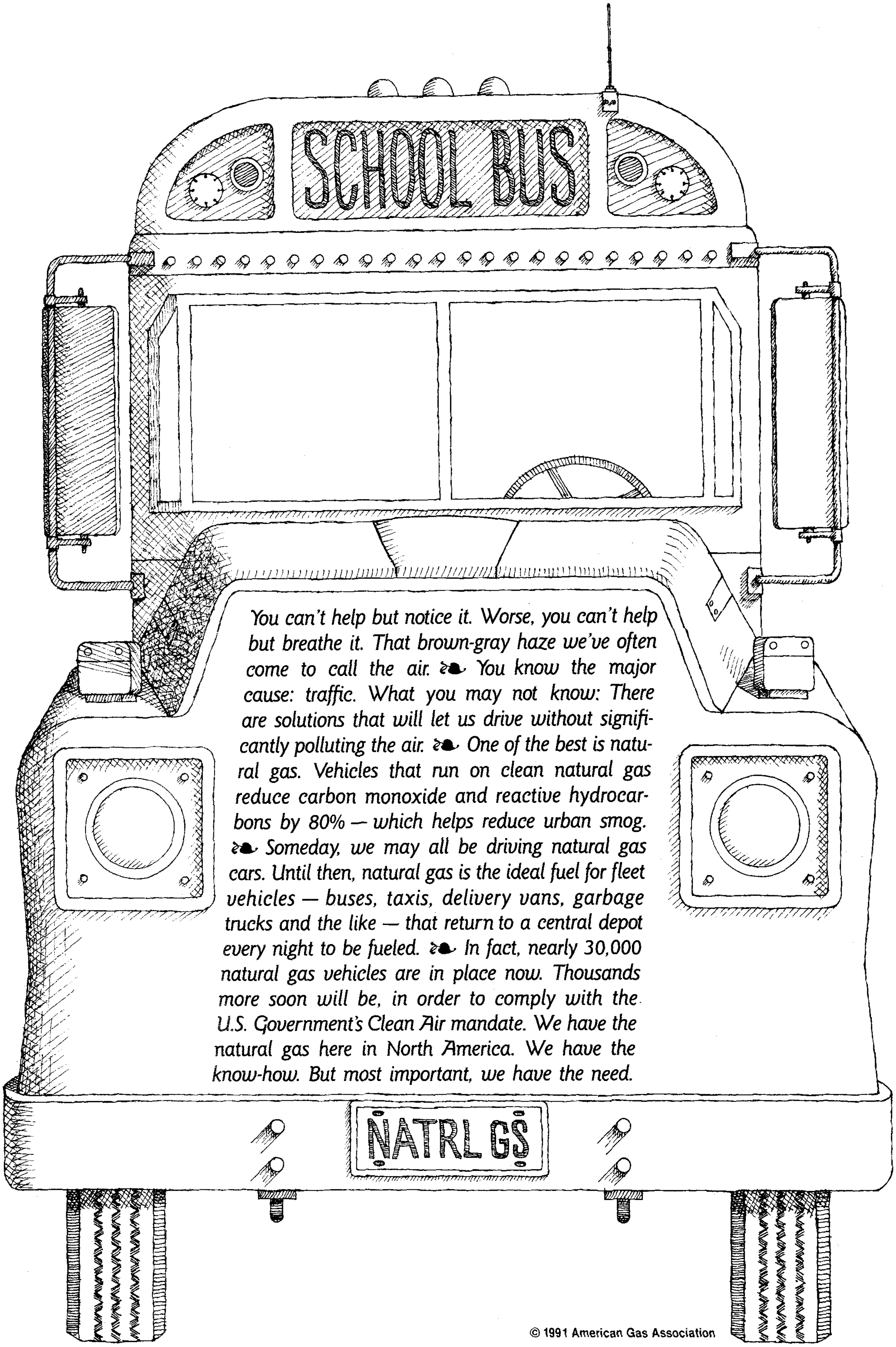
JAPAN SOCIETY, 333 E. 47th St. (752-3015)—April 5 at 6:30: "Magino Village: A Tale" (1987, Shinsuke Ogawa; in Japanese).

ANTHOLOGY FILM ARCHIVES, 32-34 Second Ave., at Second St. (477-2714)—April 3-5 at 6 and 8, April 6 at 6 and 10, and April 7 and 10 at 8: "Something to Do with the Wall" (1990, Marilyn Levine and Ross McElwee). . . . ¶ April 3-5 at 9:30: Three different programs of short films. . . . ¶ April 6 at 4: "L'Age d'Or" (1930, Luis Buñuel and Salvador Dali; in French). . . . ¶ April 6 at 8 and April 7 at 4: Two different programs of work by Piotr Bikont. . . . ¶ April 7 at 9:30: "Symphonie Diagonale" (1924, Viking Eggeling) and "Rien Que les Heures" (1928, Alberto Cavalcanti). . . . ¶ April 10 at 9:30: "Sherman's March: An Improbable Search for Love" (1986, McElwee).

FLORENCE GOULD HALL, 55 E. 59th St. (355-6160)—April 3 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "The Woman on the Beach" (1947, Jean Renoir), with Joan Bennett, Robert Ryan, and Charles Bickford. . . . ¶ April 10 at 12:30, 3:15, 6, and 8:45: "Straight to the Heart" (1990, Léa Pool; in French), with Mattias Habisch.

DONNELL LIBRARY CENTER, 20 W. 53rd St. (621-0619)—April 2 at noon: "Arsenic and Old Lace" (1944, Frank Capra), with Cary Grant, Priscilla Lane, Raymond Massey, Peter Lorre, Josephine Hull, and Jean Adair. . . . ¶ April 2 at 2:30: "Hand Carved" (1980, Herb E. Smith and Elizabeth Barret). . . . ¶ April 9 at noon: "Notorious" (1946, Alfred Hitchcock), with Cary Grant, Ingrid Bergman, and Claide Rains. . . . ¶ April 9 at 2:30: "The Big Lever" (1982, Frances Morton).

WHITNEY MUSEUM, Madison Ave. at 75th St. (570-0537)—April 2 at 5:45 and April 3 at 2: "The Machine That Killed Bad People" (1990, Steve Fagin). . . . ¶ April 4-5 at 2: "The Man in the Mirror" (1990, Aimee Morgana) and "History and Memory" (1991, Rea Tajiri). . . . ¶ April 6-7 at 2: "Hard Times and Culture, Part 1" (1990, Juan Downey) and "Strategies for the Development of . . ." (1989, Lawrence Andrews). . . . ¶ April 9 at 6:15 and April 10 at 2: "A Spy in the House That Ruth Built" (1989, Vanalyne Green) and "Blind Country" (1989, Ericka Beckman and Mike Kelley).



You can't help but notice it. Worse, you can't help but breathe it. That brown-gray haze we've often come to call the air. ❧ You know the major cause: traffic. What you may not know: There are solutions that will let us drive without significantly polluting the air. ❧ One of the best is natural gas. Vehicles that run on clean natural gas reduce carbon monoxide and reactive hydrocarbons by 80% — which helps reduce urban smog. ❧ Someday, we may all be driving natural gas cars. Until then, natural gas is the ideal fuel for fleet vehicles — buses, taxis, delivery vans, garbage trucks and the like — that return to a central depot every night to be fueled. ❧ In fact, nearly 30,000 natural gas vehicles are in place now. Thousands more soon will be, in order to comply with the U.S. Government's Clean Air mandate. We have the natural gas here in North America. We have the know-how. But most important, we have the need.

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IN BRIEF

SEE ABOVE FOR THEATRE ADDRESSES AND TELEPHONE NUMBERS.
IF A MOVIE HAS BEEN REVIEWED IN "THE CURRENT CINEMA" DURING THE PAST TWO YEARS, THE DATE OF ITS REVIEW IS GIVEN.

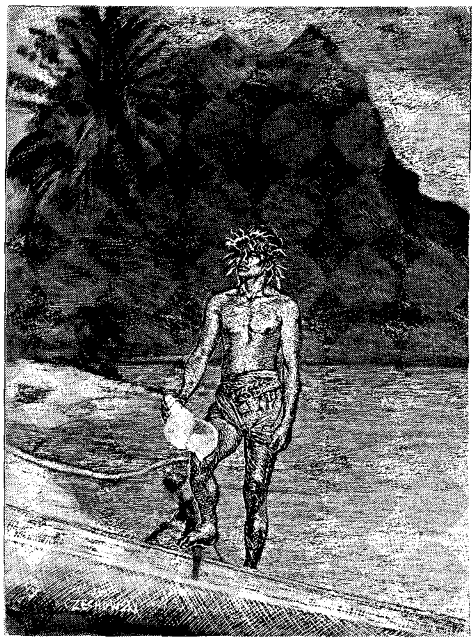
(The following notes are by Pauline Kael, Terrence Rafferty, and Michael Sragow.)

Alice—Woody Allen's latest picture is an awkward blend of whimsy and moralizing. The title character, played by Mia Farrow, is a pampered Upper East Side lady-who-lunches. She lives in a huge apartment with her handsome husband (William Hurt), her adorable children, and a staff, and she looks terrific. But her life, the movie tells us, is totally empty and false. A Chinatown doctor (Keye Luke) gives her a variety of herbal remedies to knock the yuppie malaise out of her system. One of them makes her invisible; one makes her irresistible to men; and so on. As these fantasy episodes mount up, Alice begins to see how artificial her life is, how far she's strayed from the pure ideals of her Catholic girlhood, how much more love she needs than she has been getting, and what a revolting piece of Wasp slime her husband is. In the end, the heroine seems, incredibly, to have redeemed herself through self-absorption; the movie doesn't benefit from any such miracle. Although there are more jokes here than in any of Allen's last few features, the picture isn't really a comedy; it's a sermon with gags. The large cast also includes Joe Mantegna, Alec Baldwin, Blythe Danner, Judy Davis, Bob Balaban, and Bernadette Peters (who does a sensational brief turn as a cynical muse).—T.R. (Reviewed in our issue of 12/31/90.) (Loews Fine Arts.)

Class Action—In this high-concept legal thriller, directed by Michael Apted, Gene Hackman plays a flamboyant lawyer who specializes in civil-liberties and consumer-advocacy cases, and Mary Elizabeth Mastrantonio plays his daughter, an ambitious associate in a slick corporate-law firm. The script—by Carolyn Shelby, Christopher Ames, and Samantha Shad—contrives to pit the father and the daughter against each other in a negligence suit against an auto manufacturer. Sparks, both personal and professional, are meant to fly, but the Hollywood engineers who designed this piece of product have cut a few too many corners: the thriller plotting is predictable, the family drama is broad and sentimental, and the connections between them are facile. The actors are often saddled with lines so solemnly false that you feel like leaping out of your chair and shouting, "Objection!" Yet Hackman and Mastrantonio somehow manage to impart lifelike rhythms to their scenes together; their skill keeps this rickety contraption from stalling completely. Also with Colin Friels, Joanna Merlin, Larry Fishburne, Donald Moffat, and Fred Dalton Thompson.—T.R. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Coronet, Art Greenwich Twin, Chelsea Cinemas, 62nd & Broadway, and National Twin.)

The Comfort of Strangers—With Natasha Richardson, Rupert Everett, Christopher Walken, and Helen Mirren; directed by Paul Schrader. (Reviewed in this issue.) (Angelika Film Center.)

Dances with Wolves—Set during the Civil War, this big Indians-versus-Calvary epic is like a New Age social-studies lesson. Kevin Costner, who directed and is the star, has an untroubled face and laid-back diction. As Lieutenant Dunbar, a Union officer, he sees that the Sioux have a superior culture and he changes sides. This is a nature-boy movie, a kid's daydream of being an Indian. When Dunbar has become a Sioux named Dances with Wolves, he writes in his journal that he knows for the first time who he really is. Costner has feathers in his hair and feathers in his head. He and his friend Michael Blake (who worked up the material with him in mind and then wrote the novel and the screenplay) are trying to show the last years of the Sioux as an independent nation from the Sioux point of view, and it's probably that sympathy for the Indians that the audience responds to. But Costner is a moviemaking novice: instead of helping us understand the Sioux, he simply makes the Sioux like genial versions of us. This three-hour Western weeper, with its sluggish action and poorly shaped scenes, was made by a bland megalomaniac. (The Indians should have named him Plays with Camera.) Shot in South Dakota; the wide-screen cinematography, by Dean Semler, is spacious and open at times, and there are fine images of buffalo pounding by. With Mary McDonnell, Maury Chaykin, Robert Pastorelli, Graham Greene as Kicking Bird, and Rodney A. Grant as Wind in His Hair.—P.K. (12/17/90) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews Tower East, and Loews Paramount. . . . ¶ Embassy 1; starting April 5.)



Matahi in "Tabu"

F. W. Murnau's 1931 silent classic, "Tabu" (playing April 5-11 at the Film Forum 2), is primal exotica about a Bora Bora virgin (Reri) who resists becoming the untouchable sacred maiden of the whole South Seas. Her beau (Matahi) spirits her away to another island, where he makes a living as a pearl diver and racks up outrageous debts. Tabu—an alternate spelling of "taboo"—is the system of customs and beliefs that curses the couple for profaning a divine rite.

"Tabu" starts out shakily, but once Murnau's vision takes hold, this spectacle turns into a masterpiece. (Murnau began the movie in collaboration with Robert Flaherty; they share the story credit.) To Murnau, the islanders are in synch with natural forces that are also supernatural. The director fills the action with mystery and metaphor. When the tribal elder who captures the runaway stows her in the hold of his boat and then shuts up the hatchway, it's as if he's sealing her in a coffin.

Photographed by Floyd Crosby (who won an Oscar), "Tabu" looks like no other film (especially in its glimmering new 35-mm. print). Murnau doesn't go after the usual island vistas. Sometimes he cuts out the sky entirely, giving his frame over to the dramatic rock formations and the roiling sea, and imbuing his hula-dancing characters with an imposing exuberance. "Tabu" does move like other films—all by Murnau. He's a virtuoso manipulator of images and rhythms. His "Nosferatu" was subtitled "A Symphony of Shadows." "Tabu" is a symphony of sun, moon, sand, and waves.

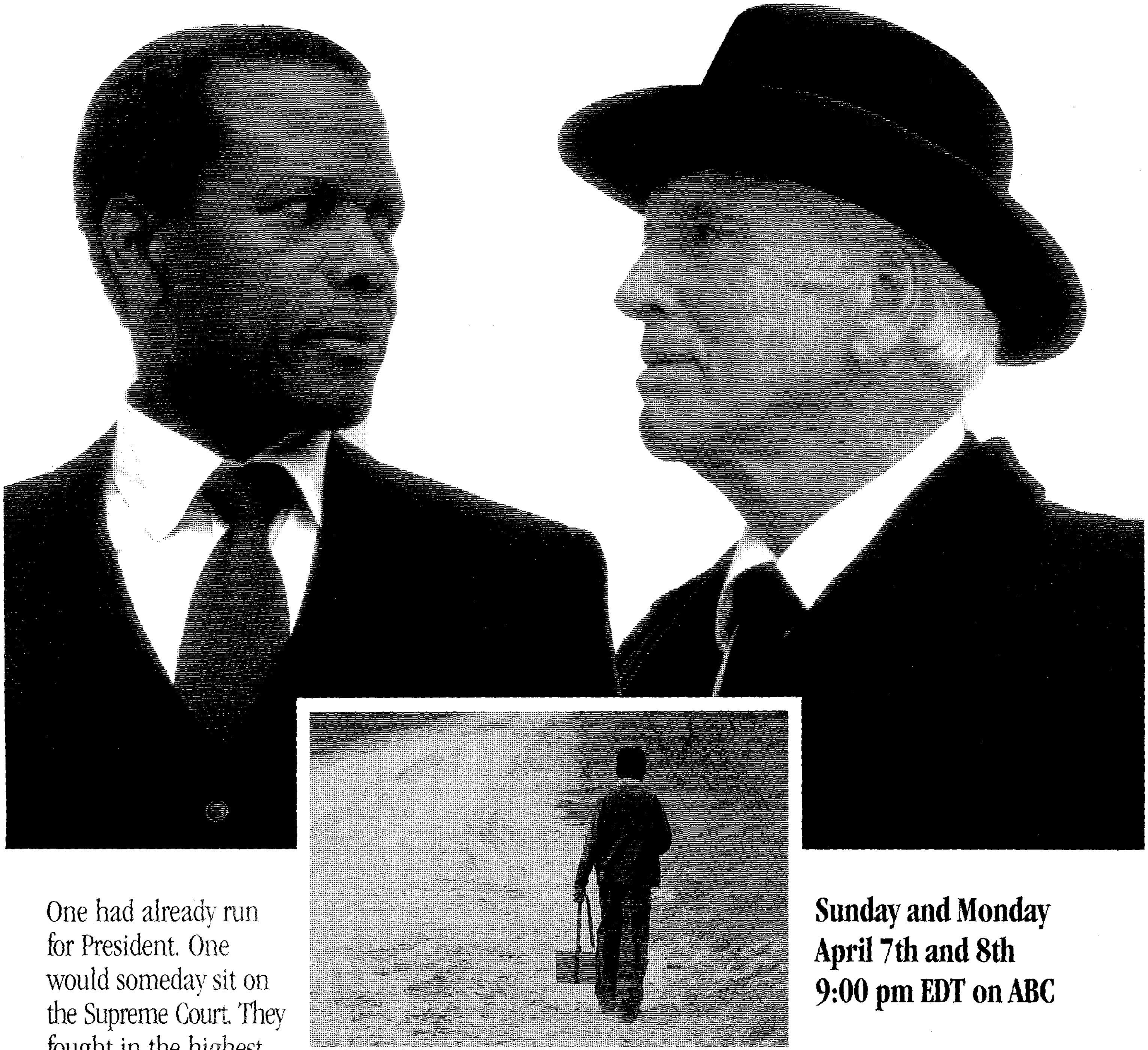
The Doors—Oliver Stone's film about the sixties rock group focusses on Jim Morrison, its lead singer and main songwriter, who died in 1971, at the age of twenty-seven. Morrison (played by Val Kilmer) presented himself as a combination of shaman and *poète maudit*, and he was a star in life and a legend in death because he made the physical, intellectual, and spiritual excesses of the counterculture sexy. The movie is pure exploitation—an extended, self-important freakout. Stone gobbles up Morrison and the sixties and rock and roll as if they were drugs; he seems less interested in interpreting the Vietnam era than in simply appropriating as much of its unruly, orgiastic energy as he can. He reduces the richly contradictory experience of that period to the myth of Morrison, and, in the process, reduces Morrison and the Doors as well: the movie restricts the viewer's freedom to imagine the sixties culture as anything but a movement with a single voice, or to imagine the Doors as anything but a metaphor. (Kilmer is physically convincing as Morrison, but his performance can be only an impersonation: what the script—by Stone and J. Randal Johnson—gives him to play is the icon, not the man.) For a while, the obviousness and flat-out vulgarity are sort of entertaining, and it might be possible to enjoy the movie as a camp classic if you could ignore the mean-spiritedness that keeps breaking through—the fundamental hostility Stone seems to feel toward his subjects. He wants to turn the audience (and himself) on, but the movie's bad faith and tabloidlike sensibility leave us exhausted and depressed; we feel like voyeurs of our own memories. Also with Meg Ryan, Kathleen Quinlan, and Michael Wincott; the other Doors are played by Kyle MacLachlan, Frank Whaley, and Kevin Dillon.—T.R. (3/11/91) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gemini, Ziegfeld, and Loews 84th Street Sixplex.)

La Femme Nikita—The end of French cinema as we know it. Written and directed by Luc Besson. With Anne Parillaud, Jean-Hugues Anglade, Tcheky Karyo, and (in a cameo) Jeanne Moreau. In French.—T.R. (Angelika Film Center, and Carnegie Hall Cinemas.)

The Five Heartbeats—There isn't a good scene per Heartbeat in this rags-to-sequins story of a Temptations-like five-man singing group. The sweet temper and eager-to-please showmanship of director-star Robert Townsend (who co-wrote the script with Keenen Ivory Wayans) can't compensate for his amateur filmmaking. The early sequences of the quintet's formation have some vaudevillian humor and unzipped energy, but then Townsend crams too much in: racism, "crossover" pressures, drugs, criminality, sexual and professional competition, and, yes, religious redemption. None of the Heartbeats (Townsend, Michael Wright, Leon, Harry J. Lennix, Tico Wells, and, later, John Canada Terrell) scores the way Lonette McKee did in the girl-group movie "Sparkle." The only singer who *does*—Tressa Thomas, who plays Townsend's baby sister—performs once and is never heard from again. She tears through a number called "We Haven't Finished Yet." Townsend should have taken that cue; his movie is painfully unfinished.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Manhattan Twin, Park & 86th Street Cinemas, Waverly, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and Criterion Center.)

Ghost—It sounds like a horror movie, but it's a romantic fairy tale. The scariest thing about it is its shamelessness. A young New York bank executive, Sam (Patrick Swayze), is killed, on the street, at a moment in his life when everything seems to be going his way. After his death, Sam sticks around, as a spirit (and Swayze stays onscreen, as a body). He attends his funeral; watches his beautiful girlfriend, Molly (Demi Moore), drift grief-stricken through the spectacular loft they

Separate But Equal



One had already run for President. One would someday sit on the Supreme Court. They fought in the highest court in the land, pitted against one another over the education of a single black schoolboy. And the result is still being felt today.

Sunday and Monday
April 7th and 8th
9:00 pm EDT on ABC

*Starring **Sidney Poitier** as Thurgood Marshall, **Burt Lancaster** as John W. Davis. With Richard Kiley and Cleavon Little. A George Stevens Jr. Production.*

A General Motors Mark of Excellence Presentation GM had just moved into; and then devotes himself to protecting her from the people who killed him. Through a reluctant psychic (Whoopi Goldberg), he tries to communicate with Molly; later, an experienced ghost (Vincent Schiavelli) teaches him how to move objects and break stuff. In this movie, death is treated as if it were merely a form of disability, one of those handicaps we've seen people struggle bravely with in TV movies—something for the individual to triumph over with will power, hard work, and love. This creamy-toned fantasy, directed by Jerry Zucker from a screenplay by Bruce Joel Rubin, certainly pushes the audience's emotional buttons. It's a twentysomething hybrid of "It's a Wonderful Life" and some of the goofier, more solemn episodes of "The Twilight Zone," and there's not a trace of wit or irony in it. Its images of death have a soothing banality, like a greeting-card message from the world beyond. Also with Tony Goldwyn and Rick Aviles.—T.R. (7/30/90) (Embassy; through April 4.)

GoodFellas—The director, Martin Scorsese, gives you a lift. He loves the Brooklyn organized-crime milieu, because it's where distortion, hyperbole, and exuberance all commingle. The movie is about being cock of the walk, with banners flying and crowds cheering. Based on Nicholas Pileggi's nonfiction book "Wiseguy," it's a triumphant piece of filmmaking—journalism and sociology presented with the brio of drama. But the three major hoods, played by Ray Liotta, Robert De Niro, and Joe Pesci, don't have a strong enough presence, and the movie lacks the juice and richness that come with major performances. (It's like the Howard Hawks "Scarface" without Scarface.) What you respond to is Scorsese's bravura; the filmmaking process becomes the subject of the movie. Watching it is like getting strung out on pure sensation. Paul Sorvino as Paulie and Lorraine Bracco as Karen both come through, and other performers in minor roles give the movie a frenzied, funny texture. The screenplay is by Pileggi and Scorsese; the cinematography is by Michael Ballhaus; the editing is by Thelma Schoonmaker.—P.K. (9/24/90) (Gramercy, Gemini, Quad Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

The Grifters—This adaptation of one of the punchier pulp novels by Jim Thompson retains Thompson's hardboiled pitilessness. It's about three scam artists: tough, seductive Lilly (Anjelica Huston); her son, Roy (John Cusack), who won't have anything to do with her; and his bubbly bedmate, Myra (Annette Bening), a sex fantasy comes to luscious life. These chisellers never got a break and don't give anybody else a break. The director, Stephen Frears, and the scriptwriter, Donald E. Westlake, are smart enough not to attempt to make a big thing out of this L.A. film noir. They keep it snappy, and heighten the sexual electricity. And they smack us with discord; we're watching a form of cabaret. Huston is astounding—you can see why the son is getting even with her by throwing his life away, and Bening's two-faced little-girl quality is just what film noir thrives on. (This is a picture with two competing femmes fatales.) It's thin stuff, but it's pretty terrific. (It even has great opening titles.) With Pat Hingle giving the performance of his life.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas. . . . ¶ Sutton; through April 4.)

Guilty by Suspicion—Can a mannequin acquire political consciousness? That's the only question raised by this flaccid anti-HUAC morality play. To judge from Robert De Niro's hollow impersonation of a blacklisted director, the answer is no. Irwin Winkler, the veteran producer, who here makes his directing début, has designed De Niro's hero as a good-hearted liberal (circa 1951) who just wants to keep making movies without naming names. Winkler and De Niro hope to forge a magnet for sympathy and instead construct a vacuum. The politics get sucked right in. Only peripheral figures turn out to be lapsed or unrepentant Communists, or even steady sympathizers. The victims include a Joseph Losey-like director (played with amusing snap by Martin Scorsese) and a Dorothy Comingore-like actress (Patricia Wettig, in a stupefying histrionic exhibition). More energy went into creating composite characters than into analysis or drama. The result is less a political rally than an Old Left mix and match. How virtuous is this movie? Annette Bening plays De Niro's ex-wife—a schoolteacher. Because of the blacklist, they kiss and make up. The script is credited to Winkler.—M.S. (Loews 19th Street East 6, Cinema II, 8th St. Playhouse, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Criterion Center. . . . ¶ 86th Street East Twin; through April 4.)

The Hard Way—Michael J. Fox has said that when he and James Woods teamed up on this numbing farce, they decided to be "cheap, fast, and funny." They got two out of three. With Fox as a congenial Hollywood superstar and Woods as a volatile New York City cop, the movie turns self-parody into self-defeat. The premise sounds promising: Fox apes Woods' every move to research the role of a headstrong cop. But the director, John Badham, reduces the potential Pirandellian horseplay to a series of lame Tinseltown "in" jokes. As a lightweight glamour boy, Fox devalues his own affability. Woods gives intensity a bad name. There may be no surprises left in this performer's bulletproof acrimony, and the script (by Daniel Pyne and Lem Dobbs, from a story by Dobbs and Michael Kozoll) shoots him one expletive-dotted diatribe after another, as if a temper and a mouth were proof of integrity. The moviemakers struggle to be witty and knowing—when the antagonists seal their friendship in the obligatory post-"48 Hrs." fistfight, another character comments on their "male bonding." But even at its most cartoonishly self-aware, "The Hard Way" remains a dullard as well as a contradiction in terms—wholesome, babyfaced camp. Stephen Lang plays the bad guy (a serial killer) and Annabella Sciorra the good woman (a single mother) who bring Woods and Fox together—the easy way.—M.S. (Baronet, Park & 86th St. Cinemas, Chelsea Cinemas, Worldwide Cinemas, Regency, and Criterion Center.)

Ju Dou—It's been compared to James M. Cain, but the postman barely rings once in this tale of adultery Chinese style. In a small mountain village in the twenties, an impotent dye-mill owner (Li Wei), crazed over his lack of an heir, tortures his beautiful young bride (Gong Li). She seeks comfort in the arms of his worker nephew (Li Bao-Tian). There's no compelling plot, only the grinding inevitability of fate and tradition. The director, Zhang Yimou, simply metes out punishment to the lovers, the tyrant—and the audience. The lovers' son does most of the damage. He has the lethal power of the Children of the Damned—unfortunately, without the gimmicky zest of their eerie, glowing eyeballs. Yimou started out as a painter and still photographer. He remains one, devoting more attention to the dye mill's set design than to the story or the characters. The bolts of fabric are colored in subtle, vivid hues; the people are made out of whole cloth. In Mandarin.—M.S. (Lincoln Plaza.)

The Long Walk Home—Sisterhood—and liberalism—are powerful once again in this soul-stirring civil-rights drama. A bit too programmatic for the big screen, it would have been a landmark TV movie. But the cast overcomes. Sissy Spacek plays a proper Southern matron with an independent streak, and Whoopi Goldberg is the housemaid who inspires her to become a car-pool driver during the Montgomery bus boycott of 1955-56. Goldberg has never been better. In a part calling for restraint and constant wariness, she has all-seeing eyes. She summons an embattled dignity that gathers tremendous cumulative force. Spacek is appropriately smug as well as sharply empathic; for a role of this type, she's unusually unsentimental. Working from a script by John Cork (a Montgomery native), under the direction of Richard Pearce, these actresses embody the old integrationist dream: they descry each other's positions and seize a common ground. The movie is designed to be "inspirational," but it respects your intelligence. The climax is rousing, not rabble-rousing.—M.S. (Murray Hill Cinemas, Sutton, Quad Cinema, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

The Man Who Knew Too Much (1934)—This Hitchcock thriller about a kidnapping and an attempted political assassination features Leslie Banks, Edna Best, Pierre Fresnay, Nova Pilbeam as the kidnapped child, and Peter Lorre (it was Lorre's début in English-language films), and it has the director's ingenuity and flair and sneaky wit. The best scenes—especially an assassination attempt at Royal Albert Hall—are stunning, but Hitchcock seems sloppily unconcerned about the unconvincing material in between the tricks and jokes (a fault that persisted in the later, stodgier version, which he made in 1955, in color, with James Stewart and Doris Day).—P.K. (Theatre 80 St. Marks; April 7.)

Mr. & Mrs. Bridge—An adaptation, by the Merchant-Ivory team (the director James Ivory, the producer Ismail Merchant, and the writer Ruth Prawer Jhabvala), of Evan S. Connell's novels about the painfully respectable Bridge family of Kansas City. Walter and India Bridge (Paul Newman and Joanne Woodward) are pure exemplars of the middle: they're middle-aged and middle-class, they live in a medium-sized city in virtually the dead center of the United States; and they are neither truly happy nor consciously unhappy. They're monsters of moderation. At the beginning of the film, Ivory seems eerily in tune with the novels' distinctive sensibility. The picture gets by, initially, on its strange mood of chilling coziness, and when we tire of that—and we do, because it doesn't change or develop—the actors keep us engaged a while longer. Newman doesn't try to soften the character, or to distance himself from it with exaggerated effects, and his scrupulousness pays off. The character seems not more likable but more human than it does in the novels; by very simple means, Newman enables us to understand Mr. Bridge's insensitivity and emotional ineptitude. And Woodward, too, gives a delicate, subtle performance; she embodies a foolish woman vividly and unpatronizingly. But the screenplay retains the static quality of the books' construction, so at a certain point the scenes begin to feel arbitrary. And Ivory's perspective on the material seems to become clouded by a storm of minutiae—a surfeit of period detail. (The action takes place in the late thirties and early forties.) In the end, the Bridges aren't large enough either to move us or to terrify us: they're the Ambersons without the magnificence. Also with Blythe Danner, Kyra Sedgwick, Robert Sean Leonard, Margaret Welsh, and Simon Callow.—T.R. (12/3/90) (Village East Cinemas, Cinema 3rd Avenue, Chelsea Cinemas, and Worldwide Cinemas.)

Mister Johnson—With Pierce Brosnan, Edward Woodward, and Maynard Eziashi; directed by Bruce Beresford. (Reviewed in this issue.) (57th St. Playhouse.)

New Jack City—A Saturday night not-so-special, with juicy bits and pieces. Mario Van Peebles' primitive but energetic anti-drug melodrama stars Wesley Snipes as a self-made crack king, Ice-T and Judd Nelson as the cops who try to bring him down, and Van Peebles himself as their boss, modestly named Stone. The screenwriters, Thomas Lee Wright and Barry Michael Cooper, portray Snipes' charismatic villain as a brutal ghetto cousin of the eighties white-collar criminals. He believes that a man must "rob to get rich in the Reagan era." He also must extort and murder. In the most jolting sequence, he turns an entire building into a crack apartment house. The narrative is a hash. With its combination of alienation and derring-do, "New Jack City" is like *Melvin* Van Peebles' "Sweet Sweetback's Baadasssss Song" and Brian De Palma's "Scarface" (it contains clips from both) crossed with "Serpico" and earnest TV cops-and-robbers series. When the drug lord's romantic problems come to the fore, you wonder if you missed an episode. As a whole, the movie resembles sixties biker movies as well as seventies blaxploitation films: the camera keeps riding the action, and the cast is loose and entertaining. (Chris Rock, of "Saturday Night Live," is the sacrificial crackhead, and Tracy Camila Johns, of "She's Gotta Have It," shows up as a hussy.) Snipes, in particular, both acts up a storm and stays calm at the center of it. His character injects a touch of scuzzball baroque: the odd ridge of his hair style emerges from the fury of his brain waves.—M.S. (Loews 34th Street Showplace, Manhattan Twin, 86th Street East Twin, 23rd St. West Triplex, Olympia, and West Side Cinema.)

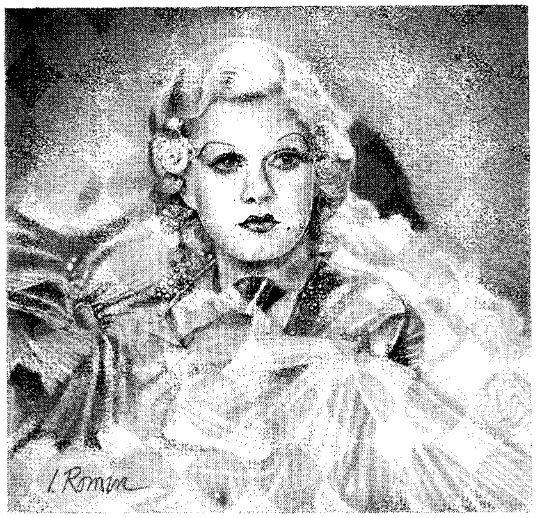
Open Doors—An Italian courtroom drama, adapted from a novella by Leonard Sciascia. Both the novella and the film, directed by Gianni Amelio, are based on an actual criminal case—the 1934 trial, in Palermo, of a Fascist bureaucrat accused of murdering his wife and two of his colleagues. The killer (played by Ennio Fantastichini) freely admits his guilt, and knows that the punishment mandated by Mussolini's government

—which he has served enthusiastically—is death. But the trial isn't the purely formal exercise that everyone expects it to be: one of the judges, Vito Di Francesco (Gian Maria Volonte), keeps fouling up the works by calling new witnesses and conducting lengthy, irrelevant-seeming interrogations of them. He wants to slow the proceedings down, to give his fellow-judges and the jurors time to consider the gravity of their responsibility—and perhaps to reconsider their authority to pronounce a sentence of death. The irony inherent in Di Francesco's strategy is that he is using his judicial powers in order to delay, or possibly avoid, exercising a judicial power he finds terrifying. Amelio treats the story, for the most part, as a conventional docudrama with an anti-capital-punishment message. The movie isn't bad at all—it just goes flat every now and then. Volonte, however, is a wonder. He looks slighter now than he did in his great roles of the sixties and seventies, but he's still a forceful presence; even when he seems to be doing nothing, you can't take your eyes off him. His role here isn't a flashy one; it's all stillness and reserve and long, thoughtful walks. Volonte's movements have a lyrical precision: they often evoke the images of aging we find in the radiant late poems of Yeats. Also with Renzo Giovampietro and Renato Carpentieri. Cinematography by Tonino Nardi. In Italian.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Lincoln Plaza.)

Paris Is Burning—Jennie Livingston's documentary about gay black and Latino men who compete in drag balls is a beautiful piece of work—lively, intelligent, exploratory. The drag queens we see here seem to be holding up a mirror to the world of the empowered as they see it in movies, TV shows, and magazines. In the ballroom, some present themselves as elegant, glamorous women in designer outfits, and walk with the hip-swinging slouch of runway models, while others adopt more mundane personas: college students (of both sexes); military men; Wall Street businessmen; aristocrats at play, dressed for yachting or riding to hounds. The criteria by which all these turns are judged is verisimilitude—"realness." The material is almost too rich, too suggestive. Everything about the ball culture signifies so blatantly and so promiscuously that the movie induces a kind of semiotic daze. Livingston is smart enough not to reduce her subjects to the sum of their possible meanings, perhaps because she realizes that the way the drag performers manipulate image and fetishes and the iconography of popular culture is for many of them a sophisticated form of humor. The most self-aware of the gay men in this picture revel in the ironies of their social and sexual identities, and Livingston makes us appreciate the comic grace and the strange wisdom of that approach. Like all the best documentary filmmakers, she does her subjects the honor of allowing them to retain some of their mystery. The movie is a sympathetic observation of a specialized, private world; it doesn't feel like a violation or an intrusion (or a dissertation). It has its share of sobering, and even tragic, moments, but its spirit is buoyant, because it never strays too far from the crazy exuberance of the ballrooms. Edited by Jonathan Oppenheim.—T.R. (3/25/91) (Film Forum.)

Reversal of Fortune—An entertainingly trashy sick-joke docudrama about how Claus von Bülow's conviction for trying to kill his superrich wife was overturned on appeal through the brainpower of the Harvard law professor Alan Dershowitz and his team of students and former students. Jeremy Irons' von Bülow is a pop conception of a decadent aristocrat, and the crowd-pleasing satirical subtext is that the heirs and heiresses of the great fortunes are useless, bored, unloving, and unloved. The fun here is that Irons' performance is a masterly conceit. His von Bülow is a depraved cuckoo; he simply can't resist playing ghoulish comedian and making Dershowitz (Ron Silver) his stooge. The script, by Nicholas Kazan, is skillfully constructed, but it's based on Dershowitz's book about the case, and he's the protagonist—the crusading lawyer searching for evidence of innocence. Silver's Dershowitz seems to be overdosing on proud sentimental Jewishness. (That this is a positive stereotype makes it no less a stereotype.) The direction, by Barbet Schroeder, is assured but often impersonal and emptily energetic. With Glenn Close (very effective as Sunny von Bülow, the comatose narrator), Christine Baranski as Andrea Reynolds, Julie Hagerty (uncredited) as Alexandra Isles, and Stephen Mailer, Annabella Sciorra, Uta Hagen, and Fisher Stevens.—P.K. (11/19/90) (Eastside Cinema, and Quad Cinema.)

Scene of the Crime (1987)—This moody provincial soap opera with thriller convolutions is largely an exercise in style by the gifted director André Téchiné ("French Provincial")—but it's a dazzling style, and there's real feeling in it. Catherine Deneuve, in perhaps her warmest and most skillful performance, plays a divorced country woman who falls in love with a young escaped convict (Wadeck Stanczak). As anyone who's ever seen a Jean Gabin melodrama from the thirties will know immediately, their affair is doomed—undone by fate, society, etc. (Deneuve's bourgeois parents, her son, her ex-husband, and the convict's jealous girlfriend are all on hand to contribute to the lovers' downfall.) The fatalistic mood is familiar, the plot is absurdly intricate, yet Téchiné's direction—mixing self-conscious homage to old movies with unself-conscious love of the landscape and the characters—gives the movie an unsettling and seductive pull, as if some strange new form of romanticism were struggling into being. With Danielle Darrieux, Nicolas Giraudi, and Claire Nebout. Screenplay by Téchiné, Pascal Bonitzer, and Olivier Assayas. In French.—T.R. (Biograph Cinema; April 7-8).



At Theatre 80 St. Marks,
Jean Harlow in "Dinner at Eight"

The Silence of the Lambs—Adapted from a novel by Thomas Harris, Jonathan Demme's thriller is artful pulp—tabloid material treated with intelligence and care and a weird kind of sensitivity. The heroine, Clarice Starling (Jodie Foster), is an earnest F.B.I. trainee who is selected to interview Dr. Hannibal Lecter (Anthony Hopkins), a psychiatrist who is also a famous mass murderer; her superiors hope that Lecter's twisted expertise can somehow be used to help them catch a serial killer known as Buffalo Bill, who flays his victims. In the course of the movie, these conversations between the trainee and the psychiatrist turn into edgy, complex transactions in which she reveals pieces of her inner life in return for his hints on how to find the killer. Hopkins plays the monster with a fine, cold relish: he gives the character a mesmeric animal stillness, the terrifying opacity of a cobra. And the impact of his performance is heightened by its contrast with everything surrounding it: the scrupulous realism of Demme's style, the mundane details of police procedure, and, in particular, the emotional transparence of the heroine. Demme keeps our attention on Starling and her shifting reactions to the world, and his most striking achievement in this picture is his direction of Jodie Foster. The suspense of this manhunt isn't of the straight-ahead kind we're used to: it's reflective, oscillating between approach and avoidance—it has an unnerving intimacy. Also with Scott Glenn, Ted Levine (as Buffalo Bill), Anthony Heald, and Brooke Smith. The screenplay, which is extremely faithful to the novel, is by Ted Tally.—T.R. (2/25/91) (Loews 19th Street East 6, Loews 34th Street Showplace, Loews New York Twin, Waverly, Loews 84th Street Sixplex, and Embassy.)

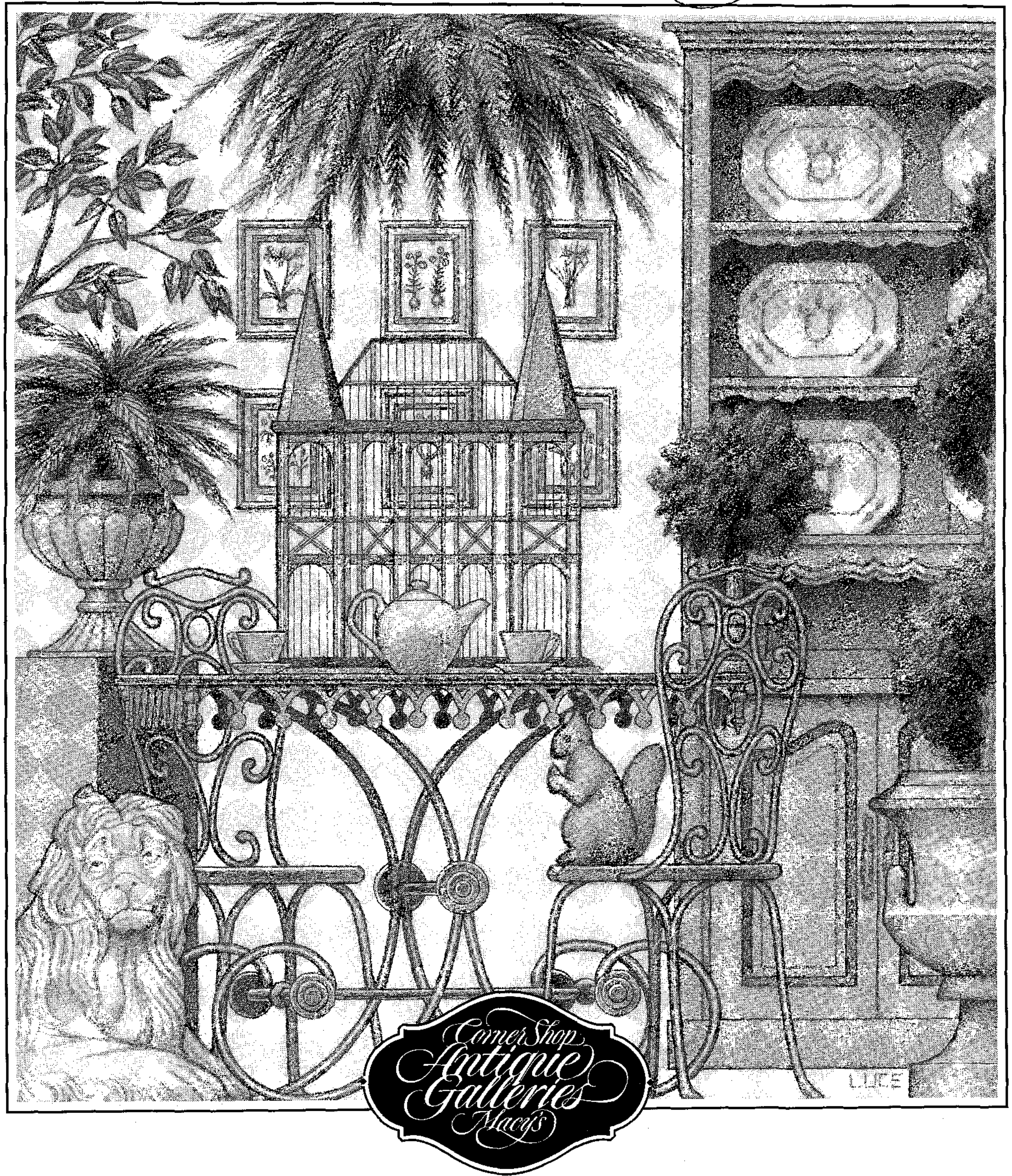
Sleeping with the Enemy—Julia Roberts, as a frightened young wife who fakes her death and changes her identity to escape her rich husband (Patrick Bergin), a psychopathic perfectionist. Roberts is an incredible object—you can at least see why a perfectionist would want to hang on to her. But she's a blank goddess here, and the settings—Cape Cod and Cedar Falls, Iowa (both shot in North and South Carolina)—are uninspiring. The director, Joseph Ruben, does a smooth job, with snappy editing every time there's a cut to the enraged husband on the wife's trail. There are no surprise twists, though; the picture is a glossy combination of secondhand, showing-off-Julia scenes from "Pretty Woman" and secondhand scares from "The Stepfather." Ronald Bass's script, out of a novel by Nancy Price, is one letdown after another. With Kevin Anderson, Elizabeth Lawrence, and Nancy Fish. The score, by Jerry Goldsmith, keeps plugging away at ominousness.—P.K. (2/11/91) (Movieland 8th Street Triplex, Gotham Cinema, Chelsea Cinemas, Metro Cinema, and Criterion Center.)

Strangers in the House (1941)—Raimu has a good tragicomic role as a dipsomaniac lawyer in this Henri Decoin film, from a script by Henri-Georges Clouzot, based on a Simenon murder mystery. The crime becomes the peg on which to hang bourgeois hypocrisy and various social evils. As this attack on French corruption was made during the Occupation, Clouzot was censured as an appeaser of the Nazis. Not released in this country until 1949, the film has had surprisingly few showings. With Pierre Fresnay as the narrator, Jean Tissier, Mouloudji, Juliette Faber, and Noel Roquevert. In French.—P.K. (Museum of Modern Art; April 5 and 7.)

Taxi Driver (1976)—Robert De Niro is in almost every frame of Martin Scorsese's feverish, horrifyingly funny movie about a lonely New York cabdriver. De Niro's inflamed, brimming eyes are the focal point of the compositions. He's Travis Bickle, an outsider who can't find any point of entry into human society. He drives nights because he can't sleep anyway; surrounded by the night world of the uprooted—whores, pimps, transients—he hates New York with a Biblical fury, and its filth and smut obsess him. This ferociously powerful film is like a raw, tabloid version of "Notes from Underground." Scorsese achieves the quality of trance in some scenes, and the whole movie has a sense of vertigo. The cinematographer, Michael Chapman, gives the street life a seamy, rich pulpiness. From Paul Schrader's script.—P.K. (Public Theatre; April 4.)

The Vanishing—George Sluizer's film has a simple, powerful thriller hook: a young Dutch woman, Saskia (the radiant Johanna Ter Steege), vacationing in the South of France with her boyfriend, Rex (Gene Bervoets), walks into a highway rest stop to buy soda and beer and never comes back. Rex's search for Saskia, which takes place over several years, produces suspense of an unusually melancholy kind. This fiendishly intelligent little movie is adapted from a novel called "The Golden Egg," by the Dutch writer Tim Krabbé (who collaborated with Sluizer on the adaptation), and its form is essentially literary. It's a sophisticated example of the sort of hermetic intellectual mysteries that Borges is famous for; the fates of Saskia and Rex are worked out with an almost geometric precision. But the movie's rigor isn't alienating, and its symmetries are evocative rather than merely clever. The film is about ordinary lives interrupted, hijacked out of time, and Sluizer, with documentary-style attentiveness to detail, does justice to the varied beauty of ordinariness. The narrative is constructed with flawless elegance, but the movie is far less self-contained than it seems; traces of deep feeling keep escaping from the artifice, like puffs of breath into cold, thin air. Not many thrillers have the sort of suggestiveness this picture has. It's a small classic. Bernard-Pierre Donnadieu gives a chilling performance as the perverse, enigmatic villain. In Dutch and French.—T.R. (1/28/91) (Cinema 12.)

The Garden Rooms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THE NEW YORKER

THE TALK OF THE TOWN

Notes and Comment

A BOOK called "Nobel Lectures: Literature, 1901-1967" fell into our hands recently, and we read it from cover to cover, trying to figure out what we've been doing wrong. "Nobel Lectures: Literature" is a very useful book for anyone who has ever thought about winning the Nobel Prize: it includes not only the laureates' lectures but also the official citations commending the laureates, remarks made at the Nobel banquets, and biographical notes (in some cases brief autobiographies provided by the laureates); and all this stuff gives you a better idea of what, exactly, the Swedish Academy of Literature is looking for when it chooses a winner, and how you should behave once you're chosen.

Everybody complains about how many writers of the second rank have won the prize—about how Pearl Buck and Steinbeck won it, while Proust and Nabokov and Auden and Borges were left unlaurelled. But we have no pretensions even to the second rank, much less to the heights of Yeats and Kipling and Eliot and Mann. The only examples we can hope to benefit from are those writers who, fairly or unfairly, no longer seem to have any rank at all. Rudolf Christoph Eucken, Karl Adolph Gjellerup, and Henrik Pontoppidan; Carl Friedrich Georg Spitteler, Carl Gustaf Verner von Heidenstam, and Jacinto Benavente; Frans Eemil Sillanpää, and Johannes Vilhelm Jensen. Who were they, and what did they write?

Many of them, you discover, wrote national epics. The Danish writer Johannes Vilhelm Jensen, for instance, won the prize, in 1944, for a six-volume prose epic, "Den Lange Rejse" ("The Long Journey"), which tells the story of Nordic Man from the discovery of fire to the discovery of America and suggests, as the Swedish Academy presenter explained, that Christopher Columbus was "a Nordic man, if not a Jutlander like himself." And then there was the Swede Erik Axel Karlfeldt, who won the prize, in 1931, for poetry in which a yeoman peasant bard named Fridolin makes frequent appearances, wearing "flowers on his hat from the harvest festival at Pungmakarebo."

Carl Friedrich George Spitteler, a Swiss poet, won the 1919 Nobel in special appreciation of "Olympischer Frühling" ("Olympian Spring"), a six-hundred-page epic poem, in which the tales of the Olympian gods are retold in Alpine settings. Harald Hjärne, the Swedish Academician who drew the task of explaining why Spitteler had won the prize, wrote, "Of this work it can be truly said that its significance had become apparent only in recent years, and that all doubts that prevented a full appreciation had to be carefully considered until its merits, not immediately obvious, could be fully recognized," and he added that Spitteler "has intentionally chosen a subject and an approach which were bound to bewilder and repel many readers of different dispositions and inclinations." The only detail of the poem that seems to have really struck him was "the plot of the impudent flatfoot people to deprive Apollo of his universal rule by means of an artificial sun and their overweening attempt to attack him in the air by means of a treacherously constructed vehicle, and poison gas."

Write epic; write cosmic; above all, write *long*. Paul Johann Ludwig Heyse, a German writer, showered so many books on the heads of the Swedes that in 1910 they gave him the prize, apparently in sheer self-defense—though, with a nice irony, their citation singled out his short stories. In his autobiography Heyse lists the various editions of his collected works; after enumerating all hundred and twenty-nine volumes—the literary works, the dramatic works, the fifty-two volumes of "Novels, Novellas, Lyrical and Epic Poems," the five-volume "Italian Poets Since the Middle of the 18th Century: Translations and Studies"—he adds, punctiliously, "Also, a translation of José Caveda y Nava's history of Spanish architecture, 'Geschichte der Spanischen Baukunst.' "

If your national epic has been written and you don't have the stamina of a Heyse, the smartest thing you can do is become the representative of a movement. At the beginning of the century, for instance, there was evi-

EGG MATZOS
Streit's matzos
GOODMAN'S EGG MATZOS
Manischewitz PASSOVER EGG MATZOS
Streit's

dently a craze in Scandinavia for Orientalia. Not one but two Scandinavian Orientalists won the Nobel Prize, and in consecutive years: Carl Gustaf Verner von Heidenstam (1916), who set his stories and poems in the Levant, and Karl Adolph Gjellerup (1917), who tried to write like a Hindu. The Academician Sven Söderman, who made the 1917 presentation, remarked that Gjellerup's works were characterized by "very broad but sometimes clumsy descriptions," and that a lot of his early writing "only barely succeeded from the artistic point of view." He did, however, commend Gjellerup's "lofty ideals." (Söderman was a little hard-pressed that year. He praised the prose of the Danish novelist Pontoppidan, who shared the prize with Gjellerup, for having "the peaceful, regular rhythm of healthy breathing.")

A certain kind of title helps, too. The bibliographical listings in the biographies suggest that the path to Stockholm lies either through the arresting, unlooked-for juxtaposition of adjective and noun, as in Maeterlinck's "Ardent Talons," Quasimodo's "The Sunken Oboe," and Spitteler's "Two Little Misogynists," or through the grand and facile antithesis: "The Old and the Young" (Quasimodo again), "Light and Heavy" (Carducci), "Stone and Sky" (Ramón Jiménez), "The Stake and the Cross" (Echegaray), "Madman or Saint" (Echegaray again), and, best of all, "The Loveliness and Wretchedness of Human Life" (Sillanpää).

Turn to the acceptance speeches, in search of further clues, and you discover that it helps to be upbeat. Faulkner's famous, weirdly cheerful man-will-not-endure-he-will-prevail speech turns out to be merely representative of the general tone. This note was most resolutely sounded by Pär Lagerkvist, a Swede (and himself a member of the Academy), who recited an interminable allegory he had written called "The Myth of Mankind." "Once upon a time," it begins, "there was a world, and a man and a woman came to it on a fine morning." But the most memorable speech is provided by Miguel Angel Asturias, the 1967 laureate; it reads like a dress rehearsal for the one that Samuel Beckett never gave: "My voice on the threshold. My voice coming from afar. On the threshold of the Academy. It is difficult to become a member of a family. And it is easy. The stars know it. . . . Scaffoldings. Ladders. New vocabularies. The primitive recitation of the texts. The rhapsodists. And later, once again, the broken trajectory. The new tongue. Long chains of words. Thought unchained."

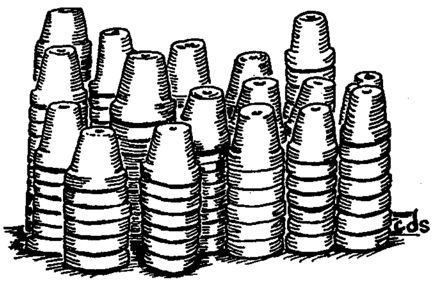
As we came to the end of the volume, an alarming idea occurred to us: What if the Nobel Prizes in the sciences turn out to be no more infallible than those in literature? For all we know, many of the Nobels in physics and medicine may have gone to the subatomic equivalents of Swedish Orientalism and to the Carl F. G. Spittelers of bacteriology. Beyond this notion lay still gloomier thoughts about the vanity of human wishes and the frailty of human knowledge, and, wishing to push them away, we shut the book and went back to work.

• •

Bingo Bus

YOU have to get up early in the morning to catch the Bingo Bus. That's Cathy's Bingo Bus, and Saturday morning. You can get on at the first stop, near the new White Castle on Twenty-first Street in Long Island City, at eight-thirty. Or you can sleep a little later and get on at the second stop, the White Castle on Queens Boulevard in Sunnyside. There's a White Castle in Flushing, too, but the Bingo Bus doesn't stop there; it stops down the street, at the corner of Northern Boulevard and Main Street. From there it goes up I-95 to Ledyard, Connecticut, near Mystic—to a huge bingo hall on the Mashantucket Pequot Indian Reservation.

Cathy Casella and Linda Noest have been running the Bingo Bus for about six months now. Cathy says that she was going up to play anyway, so she figured why not charter a bus and take along a few friends and make the trip pay for itself. She and Linda hand out flyers at bingo halls and church basements in Queens, and the bus is usually full. The reason people are eager to sit on a bus for two and a half hours in order to play bingo is simple: money. You can win more in a single game of Indian bingo than you can in a lifetime of gambling in church basements.

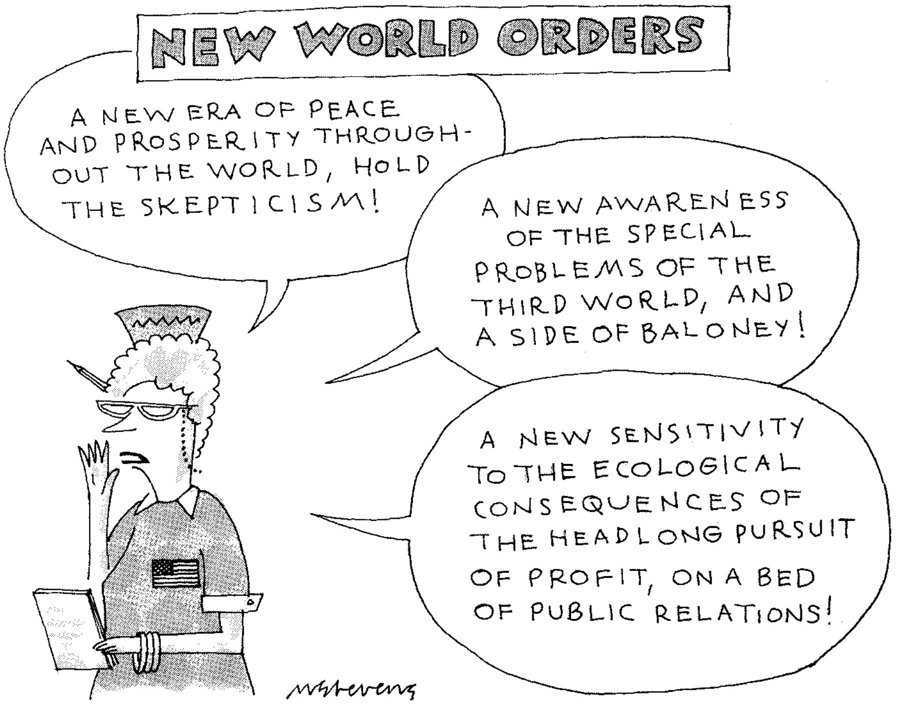


When we got on the Bingo Bus, at its first stop, many of the bingo enthusiasts already had their lapboards out and their Dab-O-Inks poised for action. Dab-O-Inks look like jars of roll-on deodorant, but they are actually fat, round sponge-tip markers, and they have taken the place of buttons or pennies for covering your numbers. Bingo buffs also carry Scotch Tape, to hold their cards in place when they're playing more than one.

Before the games began, Cathy and Linda took up a collection for the bus driver—Lavinia, of Brent's Tours. Then they held a raffle—six chances for four dollars—for the thirty-dollar price of admission to the bingo hall. Then, as "a little something else to get you going," they broke out the peel-offs: small rectangular cards, four for a dollar, with cherries, lemons, oranges, bars, and bells concealed under flaps. They have some of the appeal of slot machines. A woman who got on at Sunnyside threw five dollars at Linda and went to work, ripping open her peel-offs and redeeming the winners for more. "I'm addicted to the bars and bells," she said. "I love them, I do." Not until the bus was cruising through Stamford and the customers were getting restless did Cathy say, "O.K., pass out the bingo cards."

Cathy was the caller, sitting at the front of the bus with a bag of numbers and a microphone. Linda worked the aisles like a combination stewardess, mom, and Vegas showgirl, handing out free cookies and hard candy (junk food is apparently a necessity for bingo) and peddling game cards, three for five dollars, and "specials," a dollar apiece. (A special is a game played between regular games, for a little extra money.) Whatever Linda collected on the games she would recycle as prize money. The players went right to work, dabbing in their free spaces. Those of us who came unprepared had to use ballpoint pens.

There turns out to be much more to bingo than vertical, horizontal, and diagonal lines. Like Cleopatra, bingo is infinite in its variety. The man next


NEW WORLD ORDERS
A NEW ERA OF PEACE AND PROSPERITY THROUGHOUT THE WORLD, HOLD THE SKEPTICISM!
A NEW AWARENESS OF THE SPECIAL PROBLEMS OF THE THIRD WORLD, AND A SIDE OF BALONEY!
A NEW SENSITIVITY TO THE ECOLOGICAL CONSEQUENCES OF THE HEADLONG PURSUIT OF PROFIT, ON A BED OF PUBLIC RELATIONS!

to us explained some of the variations—Double Postage Stamp, Four Corners, Small Round Robin, Jail Bars—and warned us that at the bingo hall they played something called "quickies," in which the caller read off only numbers, no letters.

When we looked up, it was almost twelve-thirty and we were in Ledyard. Several buses were waiting to unload in the parking lot of the Mashantucket Pequot Indian bingo hall. In the hall, warmup games were in progress, but the serious bingo, with prizes of a thousand dollars a game, wouldn't start till three. Cathy took care of buying the admission packages, each including a ticket good for valuable door prizes; an All-Night Strip, with eighteen games; a U-Pick-Em card, on which you fill in your own numbers; and a Bonanza card, for the day's big jackpot, which is in five figures.

By three, the hall was full (it holds seventeen hundred people), and the players settled down for four solid hours of championship bingo. We played Hardway (no free space), Double Bingo, Crazy T, and Nine Block. We played Double Hardway, Triple Bingo, Crazy L, and Wild Number Layer Cake. We played Goal Post, Diamond, Lucky 7, and Indian Star. On the wall where you might expect to see a clock was—what else?—an electronic bingo card, which lit up to show the winning configurations. There were also TV monitors on which you could see the numbers, printed on balls, pop out of a random-number-selecting machine before the caller announced them. Just before somebody was about to score a major bingo, an expectant buzz would be audible from one section of the hall, and it would grow until the caller announced the number and the lucky player yelled "Bingo!" Then the caller, onstage in a tuxedo, waited while Tammy or Becky or Tina or one of the other floorworkers went over to the player who had yelled "Bingo," and read the serial number on the winning card into a microphone clipped to her smock. The caller verified the card by making a lightning-quick computer search, and then, like a game-show host, pronounced, "That's one good bingo."

Back on the bus at the end of the day, our eyes bleary, we thought we had had enough bingo. We'd won forty dollars—fifteen on the bus and twenty-five for being seated next to a woman who won a door prize. (Her prize was a hundred dollars, in new bills; she gave everyone around her a tap with her lucky money.) Cathy and Linda handed out cold sodas and took inventory. The biggest winner on the bus that day had made two hundred and eighty-five dollars. Then they announced the date of the next regularly scheduled bus. Finally, they asked the question everybody was waiting for: "Want to play bingo?" The passengers got out their lapboards and uncapped their Dab-O-Inks.

Wrangling

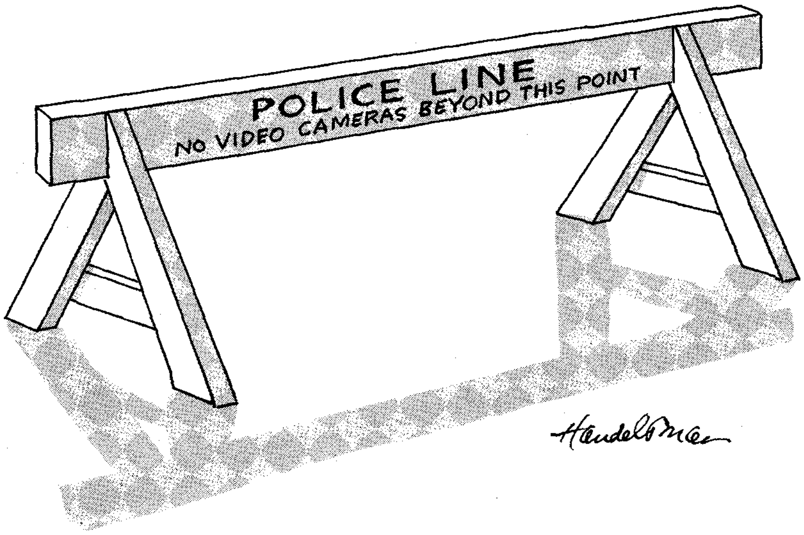
RAYMOND A. Mendez is an FX man, but he prefers his self-invented title. We spotted it recently, in the middle of the credit crawl for "The Silence of the Lambs." Under the names of the director and the actors and the technicians and the best boy and the dolly grip appeared the words "Raymond A. Mendez, Moth Wrangler." Not long ago, we found ourself sitting with Mr. Mendez in a sunny Upper West Side apartment, which he shares with his wife, Kate, and their Brussels griffon, Perry, and a colony of ponerine ants he started on a window ledge in 1972. Mr. Mendez is a trim, peppy man of forty-three, with graying temples and bright dark eyes. His résumé would give a job-placement officer pause. During his career, Mr. Mendez has trained canaries, put a zipper on an egg, designed a twenty-two-foot robot snake, and constructed a radio-controlled fully automated bald eagle. It's among insects, however, that his talents have found their full expression. The bumblebee-attack scene in "One for Sorrow, Two for Joy" was a Mendez original. So was the insect-food orgy in "America Exposed." The twenty-five thousand cockroaches that starred opposite E. G. Marshall in George Romero's "Creepshow" were Mendez cockroaches. And the two hundred death's-head moths for "The Silence of the Lambs" had Mendez written all over them: it was he who procured, hatched, costumed, customized, and "flew" the creatures.

We asked Mr. Mendez how he had got started with bugs, and learned that the career track to insect wrangling is a straight shot. "I grew up on Twenty-seventh Street between First and Second Avenues, where Bellevue is now," he said. "I was brought up in parochial schools, and I believed, like most kids, that the world revolved around me. I didn't have any sense that there were other levels of existence until I got interested in the ants and beetles and crickets that came up from the East River Drive. Most kids were stomping roaches or pulling the wings off flies, but I began taking insects home. I got hooked on the idea that there was this whole other universe in my city, this world whose inhabitants had no idea I was alive."

Fast forward to college and The Bad Influence, Mr. Mendez's band. "I was playing in the band," he told us. "I also had a temporary job at the Museum of Natural History. The museum asked me to put together a display of carpenter, bulldog, and leaf-cutter ants, and I agreed to do it for the cost of a tenor sax." Mr. Mendez got his sax, but the band fizzled out. His ant display was a hit, though, and his stay at the museum stretched to fourteen years. During that time, Mr. Mendez worked his way up from an assistant preparator to a principal preparator in charge of habitat groups in the Hall of Reptiles and Amphibians and the Hall of Asian Peoples.

Tight shot of a hand plugging in switchboard circuits. "The Museum of Natural History gets a lot of strange calls, as you can imagine," Mr. Mendez said. "Back in 1972, someone phoned needing ants for an anti-war commercial, and the operator connected him to me. Nixon, you'll remember, was using Madison Avenue to push the war then. And some anti-war folks wanted to use the same tactics to oppose him. The ad concept started with a single ant looking up at a rock on a table. Eventually, the rock is covered with ants. The ants all go to one side, then they go to the other, then they push the rock off the table. A voice-over says, 'If enough of us work together, we can do anything.' Those were my ants."

Soon Mr. Mendez was an exhibitions consultant to museums and zoos. He designed a crawl-through ants' nest for the Staten Island Children's Museum and a series of robotic arthropods for the Smithsonian Institution. He was also, in a modest way, getting into movie insects. George Romero hired him to handle the cockroach multitude for "Creepshow," and when the film was finished he didn't know what to call Raymond A. Mendez in the credits. "They wanted to give my partner, Dave Brody, and me credit as 'Roach Trainers,' " Mr. Mendez told us. "Now, I know what trainers do—endless hours with a clicker and dog treats, trying to get an animal to do a trick—and it wasn't us. You can't train roaches. Forget it. Most insects you can't force to do anything. They have no on or off switch. They'll just turn and fight you until they die. I suggested the title 'Roach Wrangler,' since it seemed to fit the job, and that pretty much stuck."


POLICE LINE
NO VIDEO CAMERAS BEYOND THIS POINT
Handelsman

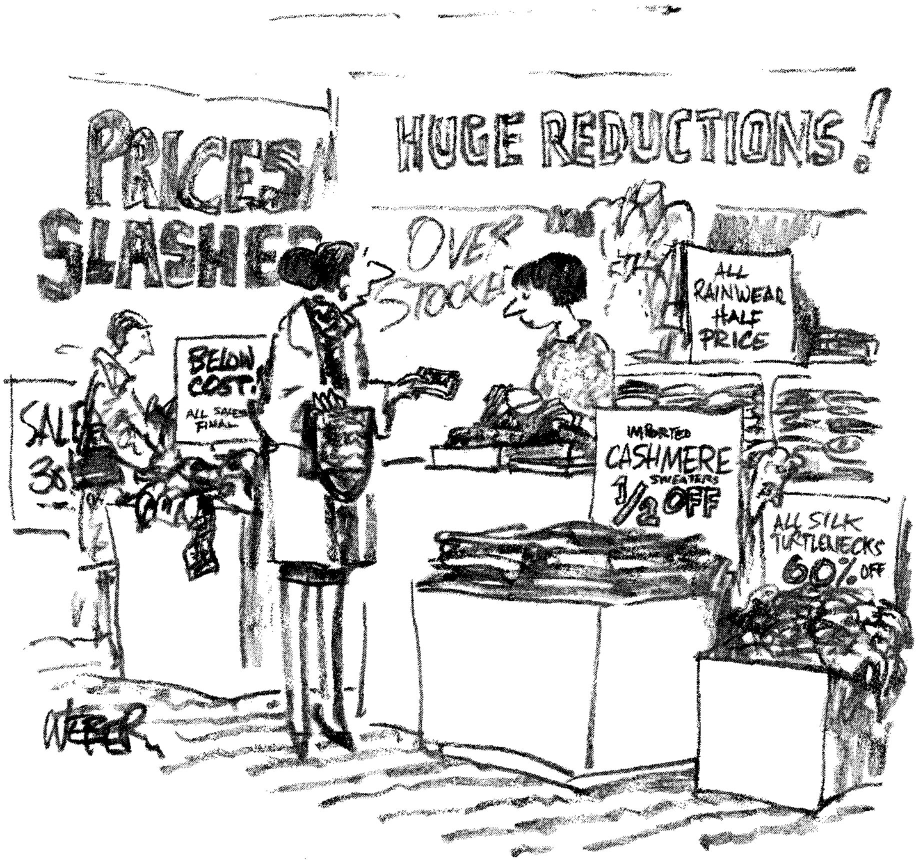
Cut to an office at the Smithsonian. "For 'The Silence of the Lambs,' Jonathan Demme's people got in touch with Sally Love, at the Smithsonian, because they wanted to film in the museum," Mr. Mendez said. "They also mentioned that they needed moths to do a few stunts on the set. She said, 'I know a guy who handles this kind of thing.' They sent me a script with the insect parts picked out. Without a biology background, you couldn't really pull this off. You have to understand insects and how they work. At first, the producers wanted to use real imported Asian death's-heads, but I told them we'd do just as well using tomato-hornworm moths."

To transform garden-variety tomato hornworms into ghostly death's-head moths, Mr. Mendez and his associate, Leanore Drogin, painted skull-and-crossbones markings on store-bought fingernails and Krazy Glued a fingernail to each moth's back. "First, though, we conked the moths out with CO_2 and used a stiff brush to remove their scales," Mr. Mendez said. Once the scales were gone, Mr. Mendez and Ms. Drogin could stick on the painted carapaces, some of which were fitted with tiny harnesses to enable Mr. Mendez to "fly" the bugs. "We'd thread steel monofilament through the harness, connect that to a fishing rod, and control the movement from off camera. That way, we could get the moths to hover and land. The scene where the moth lands on a bobbin was done that way."

When we asked Mr. Mendez if there was any difference between wrangling a roach and wrangling a moth, he said, "Not really. They're not actors, after all. Our challenge was keeping the moths camera-ready. Movies want pretty. For the scene where Jame Gumb, the psycho killer, hatches a moth, we had twenty perfect moths refrigerated and ready to go. We removed all the pupal armor except the headpiece, so the legs remained bundled in front of the thorax. We chilled the moths until it was time to shoot, then took them out and warmed them in a hot room. In each take, Ted Levine, the actor who played Gumb, could hold the moth to his face and gently remove its headpiece, and the legs and tongue would beautifully unfold. His acting is what makes it all so spooky, but we had to have the insects poised. You can't stand on the set with dozens of people and say, 'Gee, guys. I don't know what to tell you. The moths haven't hatched.' "

Survey

THERE'S something going on with baseball hats. Have you noticed the way basketball coaches and football coaches wear baseball hats even though it doesn't really make any sense? Have you noticed the way models—or tall, leggy women with blond hair who *look* like models—wear them, with their ponytails sticking through the vent in back? Have you noticed the baseball-hat/hip-hop-connection, and the way men downtown wear baseball hats with tight T-shirts to be ironic and sexy? And the way Spike Lee wears them with his wire-rim specs, creating a double-


PRICES
SLASHE
HUGE REDUCTIONS!
OVER STOCKED
ALL RAINWEAR HALF PRICE
BELOW COST. ALL SALES FINAL
SAL
30
IMPORTED CASHMERE SWEATERS 1/2 OFF
ALL SILK TURTLENECKS 60% OFF
WEBER

"I'll bet you think I'm a terrible opportunist."

reverse intellectual / anti-intellectual urban-boy-wonder whammy? This has apparently been going on for several years now, but we only recently began to think about it. Baseball hats—and baseball-style hats that don't necessarily have anything to do with baseball—are all over the place. Once you start collecting them—hat sightings, that is—you may never stop. It's like the game you played in the car as a kid, in which you kept track of all the license plates on the road, hoping to spot one for each of the fifty states.

We did an informal twenty-four-hour baseball-hat survey the other day, beginning at Everybody's Restaurant, on lower Second Avenue, where a cheerfully hip waiter named Ken was wearing a brown one with a detailed rendering of the Akron, Ohio, skyline on its crown. (Ken is *from* Akron.) Here are the rest of our findings:

On the No. 6 train, a pair of twentyish black twins, identical except for their hats—a light-blue-and-white "Duke U" and an orange-and-white "Syracuse U." In Grand Central, on a heavily mustachioed man, a red hat bearing the message "Your Hair Care Man." On Sixth Avenue, on a girl in a fur-trimmed parka, a blue Georgetown Hoyas hat (what *are* hoyas?) with a snarling steel-colored bulldog on it; also a red-and-white "Courvoisier" worn with the bill flipped up jauntily, and a black "Street News" hat on a man peddling the paper they say helps the homeless help themselves. On Madison, a guy running for the bus in a black-white-and-red STP job. Down on West Broadway, a navy "Y" on a gray background (Yale man), a deep-sea-green-and-orange combo on a gray-haired gent who favors the Miami Dolphins, and, glimpsed through a restaurant window, a dark hat reading, in gold, "U.S.S. JOHN F. KENNEDY."

We saw Running Rebels in at least three variations, a slew of Mets and Yankees, two sky-blue U.N.C.s (separate sightings, but each on one of those streetwise eleven-year-olds you see in the subway who always know where the express stops), and a whole mess of Los Angeles team hats. There's your basic purple Lakers hat, with a yellow basketball on it, and then there's a whole cult of people who wear those black-and-silver Raiders hats—maybe they have a secret handshake—and who seem to have the idea of witty-hat-wearing down pat. (Do people in L.A. have the finely tuned sense of humor that would enable them to walk around in bright-blue Giants hats?) There's also an L.A. Kings movement. These hats are black and silver, too, and identify the wearers as Wayne G. fans, or maybe as fans of the rap group N.W.A., who hail from the L.A. suburb of Compton and were instrumental in popularizing Kings headwear.

One more music connection: We stopped a frizzy-haired kid with a Walkman and a hat that read "TESTAMENT." When we asked "Is that a band?" he said "Hey, are you into metal? They rule, man!" And under the oxymoronic heading Designer Baseball Hats: On a trim Asian man in SoHo, a black hat with white lowercase lettering saying "agnès b." The accent is what makes it.

But the best hat of all, if you don't mind our saying so, was the one *we* were wearing—a neon-orange baseball hat given to us by our friend Michael. It displays the sweeping circular logo for Tide detergent, and reads, in blue, "Tide Racing Team." It's the kind of hat that goes with nothing—therefore everything—and really turns heads. Michael, who's six feet three and skinny as a rail and has bright-orange hair himself, wore this hat as his personal fashion signature for about a year, but when he heard we were getting into the hat game he graciously turned it over to us on permanent loan. He told us that it's a real stock-car driver's hat from South Carolina. On our way home, we noticed a couple of guys on the Broadway local checking it out—one in a "Brooklyn" with a two-toned red-and-white crown, the other in a solid-red hat turned backward, so that we couldn't see the logo. Backward said to Brooklyn, just loud enough for us to hear, "Yo, that Tide hat is the best." And Brooklyn, who was wearing sunglasses, even though we were in the subway and the day was cloudy, slowly lowered his shades halfway down his nose and peered over them. "*Def*initely," he said.

DIARY OF A FAN

Sunday:

I SAW Sigourney Weaver on the street today. She was alone. I pity her.

Also—is this possible?—I think I saw Leslie Howard as a young man. It was near the Museum of Modern Art, so maybe he was there for one of their revivals.

Monday:

Maurice at work wants to get serious. He sent me a Xerox copy of his face that he did in the mailroom. It was not flattering.

Lunch at the Chinese restaurant near the office. There were a lot of framed photos on the walls—struggling actors, I guess. They were all grinning like tigers, but their eyes were strictly deer caught in oncoming headlights. I asked the manager who they were, but all he could say was "Very famous." I think certain someones, or should I say certain nobodies, have been taking advantage of his recent-immigrant status. One man's photo I did recognize, but it was from seeing him at the newsstand where I get *Cahiers de la Célébrité*. He buys *Back Stage*, so how famous can he be?

After work I went to my Support for Lovers of Unattainably Remote People meeting. This week we met at Garbo Spooney's apartment. She's a second-generation fan (her mother dipped a handkerchief in Dillinger's blood), which I guess is what makes her so stuck up. She has a framed picture of herself with the Invisible Man, but I suspect it's just an Invisible Man impersonator.

Right before the meeting began she asked if anyone was attending SLURP for the first time, when obviously it was the five of us, just like always.

"You don't have to be so formal, Garb," I told her. I've been reading how successful people don't take guff.

"And you don't have to be so informal, *Sheel*," she said. Instead of Sheila. I guess she thought that was a comeback. "You might try wearing a dress or some makeup. Good grooming is the first step toward actual celebrity." I pity her. She still hasn't accepted that the Method and rock and roll changed all that forever.

Right after the meet-who-you-can-and-accept-not-meeting-Madonna pledge, one of the Cynthias (the one who works at the Bureau of Not Yet Missing Persons) started crying because she's finally faced the fact that Liz and Eddie will never reconcile. She's very slow at working these things through. Then the other Cynthia started crying about how hard it is to keep tabs on ex-Menudo members, especially since she doesn't speak Spanish. It's her own fault. If you're going to climb that mountain, you've got to do the work. No wonder real fans are a dying breed—people are getting too lazy for obsession.

Of course Garbo, in that condescending way of hers, tried to distract everyone by firing trivia questions at us. Not just the standard year-of-birth stuff, or even "Name the Seven Dwarfs," but "Name three or more rejected *suggestions* for the Seven Dwarfs' names." They're not strictly celebrities in the corporeal sense, so I resented it—especially with a Cynthia still crying—but Garbo just barrelled ahead and rattled off a few, like Hungry and Brackish and Biggo Ego, and who could contradict her? Apparently she had an aunt who slept with a Disney animator. But, she always adds, all they did was sleep. There were studio rules.

I have to give that particular Cynthia credit—she did rally. She not only named the Seven Dwarfs (no big feat unless you're racked with sobs like she was) but got into a sort of ecstatic delirium and named the entire cast of "The Magnificent Seven," including Horst Buchholz.

Then poor Gary with the two monocles started in again. He's hung up exclusively on the long-dead ones, like Cleopatra and Caruso. I tried to get him interested in Martha Stewart, but I think he *wants* to be hurt. At least it is *possible* I could meet Danny Sullivan. It is *possible* he would like me despite my problem ear, and change his ways. Gary is *never* going to meet Cleopatra, unless you believe in a Heaven where Cleopatra has lost all sense of standards. I told him to face the real world. He started crying then, too. All in all, a good meeting.

PRODUCE CO·49

Message on my machine from Maurice: Do I want to go to a party with famous scientists on Saturday? Do I like them? Someone in Toxics invited him. I want to be all I can be, but I don't want to mislead Maurice.

Tuesday:

SAW Sigourney Weaver on the street again, on my way to work. She was with a couple of people, who were talking intensely. They must want something from her. I feel sorry for her.

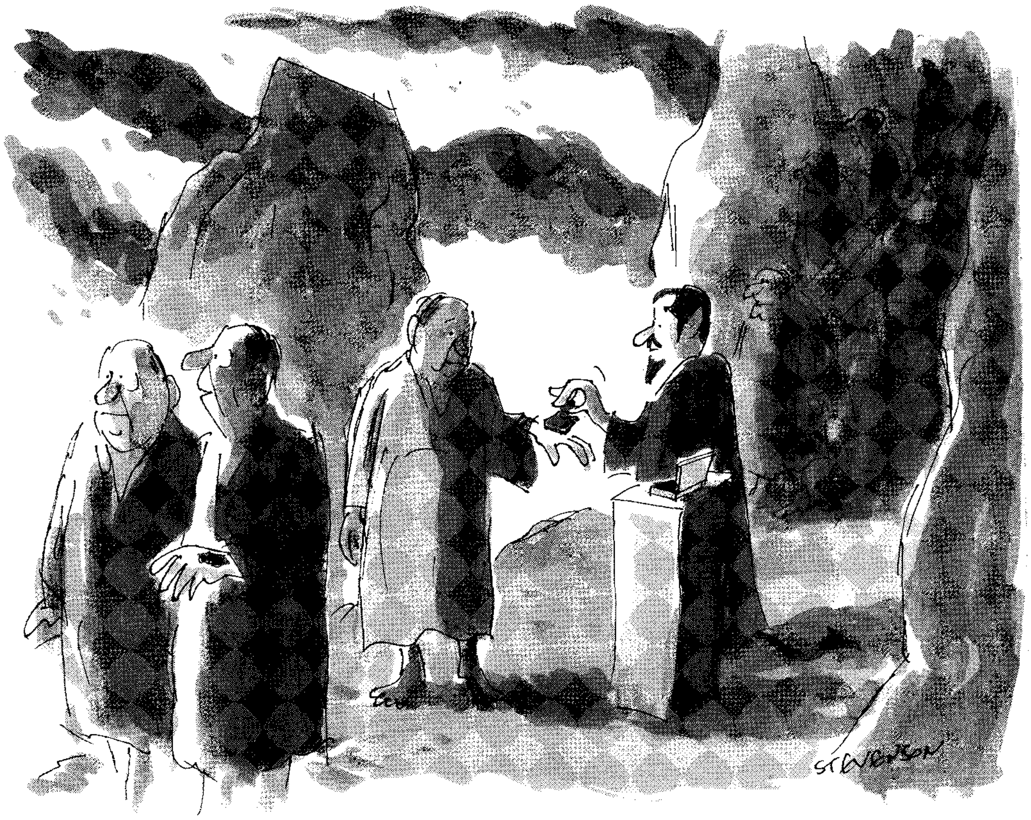
After our fire drill turned out to be real, I walked home via Broadway, past the OTB, and I think I saw Dr. Robert Jarvik, the artificial-heart man who's married to the real brain, but I'm not sure. My medical knowledge is spotty. It may have been that dentist who poses in the underwear ad. I have much to learn.

Wednesday:

HAD to go to the mailroom for Liquid Paper. Maurice still wants to get serious, but I told him I'd never heard of him, except from him, though once I saw his name posted on the United Way Delinquency Donor sheet. He said that at least *he'd* heard of *me*, and we could build on that. I told him it would be like a tree being famous in the woods when no one's around. He just stood there, kind of bathed in flashes of green light from the Xerox machine. He said I was dazzled by the sunlight on a swimming pool I'd never own, and then he pounded his fist on the postage meter ($3.40 wasted) and called me a groupie. How quickly love turns to hate! Look at the young royals and whoever.

On the way home I thought I saw Matt Dillon's stand-in, but it turned out to be Johnny Depp's alternate stunt double. He said he believes he's the reincarnation of James Dean's stunt double, but people mistake him for the movie version of Dondi, the later years. I didn't give him my number. He seems to have a few things to work out.

The corner stationery store doesn't



"*I regard this as grounds for optimism.*"

carry autograph books anymore. The clerk said they went out with culottes. I told him culottes were back, but I was shaken.

Dreamed I went to Hell but no one was there, not even the Devil. Is that the point?

THURSDAY:

I SAW Sigourney Weaver on the street *again*. Maybe she isn't so famous after all.

FRIDAY:

BIG date last night that went bust. I met a British-sounding guy in Tower Records' Accounts Overdue line who turned out to be a distant cousin of Sting's. He calls himself Chafe. Anyway, he suggested dinner later on, and in my nervousness all I could think of was the Chinese place near work. He was late—something about a conference call to rehearse his band—so I'd gone ahead and ordered. We chatted for a while about England (he'd like to go there someday), but he started getting impatient for the food, so he threw a tantrum, which isn't attractive if there are no paparazzi around. He even tried storming out, but there was a party of six coming in and he had to wait for them to get by.

I sat there having a career crisis for a second. I'm sick of dating entry-level celebs and will-have-had-beens. Maybe I should move to a small town and follow the career of the local livestock. Anyway, Chafe came slinking back in to get his knapsack, and he must have sensed my disenchantment, because suddenly I was attractive to him again. He invited me to go to Fata Morgana with him—this was the night the club was going from hip to unhip, so we could watch the dance floor empty. I said no, and he got desperate and said he was also Meat Loaf's estranged brother, Casserole. I could feel the eyes of the unknowns burning into me from the framed glossies, and I excused myself to go to the bathroom. I didn't tell him it was the bathroom back at my house.

Had a rough night. I woke up reciting Mr. Blackwell's Best Dressed List. That was odd, because I dreamed I was naked and had no place to put my autograph book.

SATURDAY:

I SHOULDN'T have, but I let Maurice take me to this reception in the Van Leeuwenhoek Room at the Sheraton, the N.S.F.'s annual ceremony to honor the Element of the Year—"that building block of matter that has most touched the hearts of the scientific community in the past twelve months." I guess I'm as corrupt as anyone, because I ditched Maurice right after the shrimp cocktail arranged like the space embryo in "2001." I said I had to phone my Gabor Update Service. I soon regretted it, because basically the scene was a bunch of bald guys throwing objects in the hotel pool and predicting the ripple effects.

The award itself seems to be totally unrelated to merit. Hydrogen was up for it—you'd think it was a shoo-in, being in air and water and all—but somebody said it was perceived as too lightweight. Boron was nominated, but it has no publicity machine at all, and a lot of people think it's a compound. Maurice's friend from Toxics said Krypton was hot, with all this Superman mania, but I bet him my sherbet in the shape of a Necker cube that Carbon would get it, since that basis-of-all-life thing gives it some human interest. But you know what won? Gold. It made me sick.

I was too ashamed to go sit with Maurice again, but he found me by the cold-fusion table and said he'd drive me home. We didn't talk the whole way. The stars were out, but I'm tired of them. Balls of gases—that's all they are.

SUNDAY:

I WAS restless, and got up early to take a walk. I didn't see Sigourney Weaver all day, and I even hung out by her bank machine. She must be trying to make a comeback. Poor Sigourney. I'm through with her.

Maurice left a message on my machine that I got at bedtime. A wandering newspaper photographer had asked him if he thought ours was a world of skewed values. I forget if he said it was or not, but his picture will be in Tuesday's paper. It occurs to me that Maurice has beautiful eyes. Patient and tender. Kind of like Benji's.

—MARK O'DONNELL

MAUSER

YOU had to know Travis Houpart not to like him, that was the thing. When people first encountered him, women especially, they thought they'd met a man worth meeting. The mustache was so trim, that reassuring dark brown, then the Christlike eyes, clear as scorched butter. The whole of him was so regular-featured and even-toned that the voice was no surprise, warm and crisp as a newscaster's, telling mild jokes and deflecting any question you might ask.

He bought me a drink on a night I needed one, a night I was down.

"You shouldn't be alone." And there he was. He wore a clean white shirt, short-sleeved. His forearms were tanned and muscular, the left one a darker brown from poking out the truck window.

"Hi, Travis."

"Where's your boyfriend?"

I told him, although he knew.

"The guy's crazy." Travis's defense of me was so blunt and sincere I sort of believed in it, or at least appreciated that someone cared enough to put on the act. I'd been dropped for a woman who also worked for the firm. Travis had followed me into the bar to present himself as the consolation prize, except that he was pure liability. I pushed the drink away.

"I'm not going to do anything stupid, I swear," he said. He lifted one hand, looked at me, all solemn.

"I'm not going to do anything stupid either."

He put down his hand and ducked his head, craned toward me as if he was looking into a small, dark room.

"To be honest . . . " He rubbed his eyes, as if to adjust his vision, and then put his fingers to his brow. "I was kind of hoping that you would."

"You're getting a couple of gray hairs here." I touched above my ear. "Distinguished."

"My wife says so, too."

That meant the bullshit was behind us. From talking to other women, I knew that once Travis mentioned his wife the conversation got more realistic.

"I do appreciate you coming over," I said. "Really, the drink and all. But, anyway, what's new with you? With Mauser?"

All of a sudden Travis looked depressed. His shirt wrinkled as his shoulders slumped. The expression on his face sagged. The lines along his mouth deepened and his mouth pinched; a sour indignation formed.

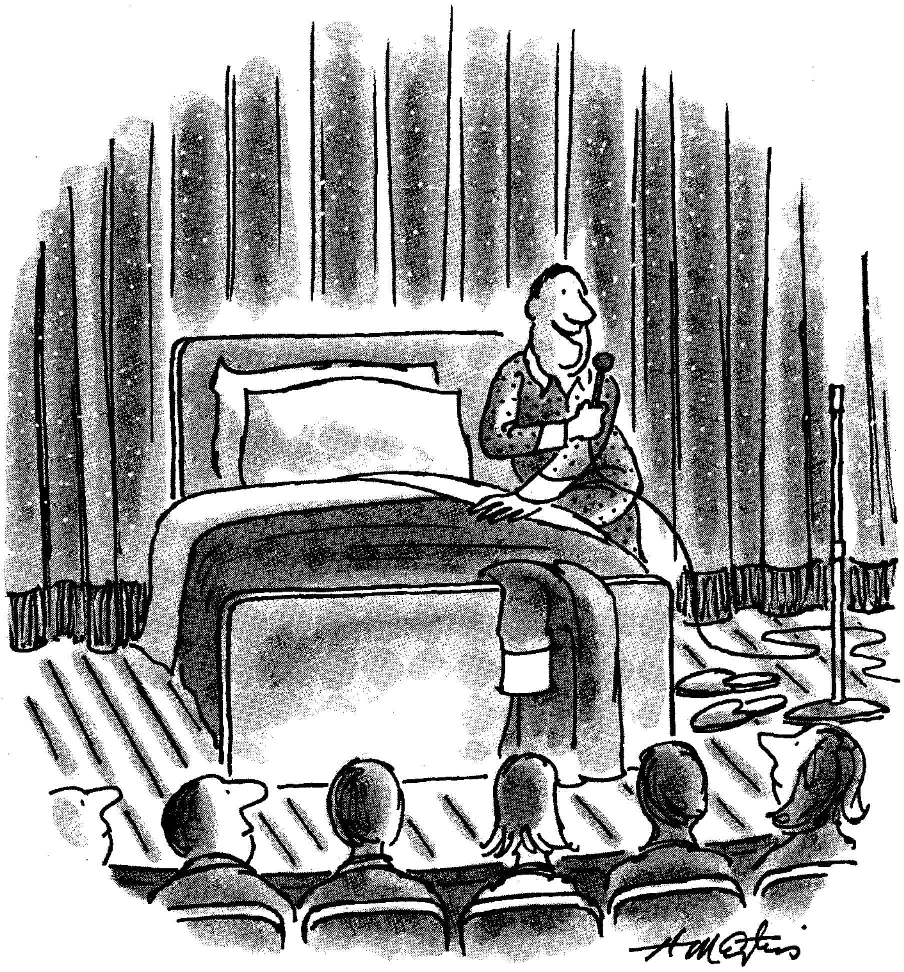
"You might say I'd like to kill the guy," he offered. "I just can't stand the type. My dad was like that. Military-minded. Do this. Do that."

"Well, he is your boss," I pointed out.

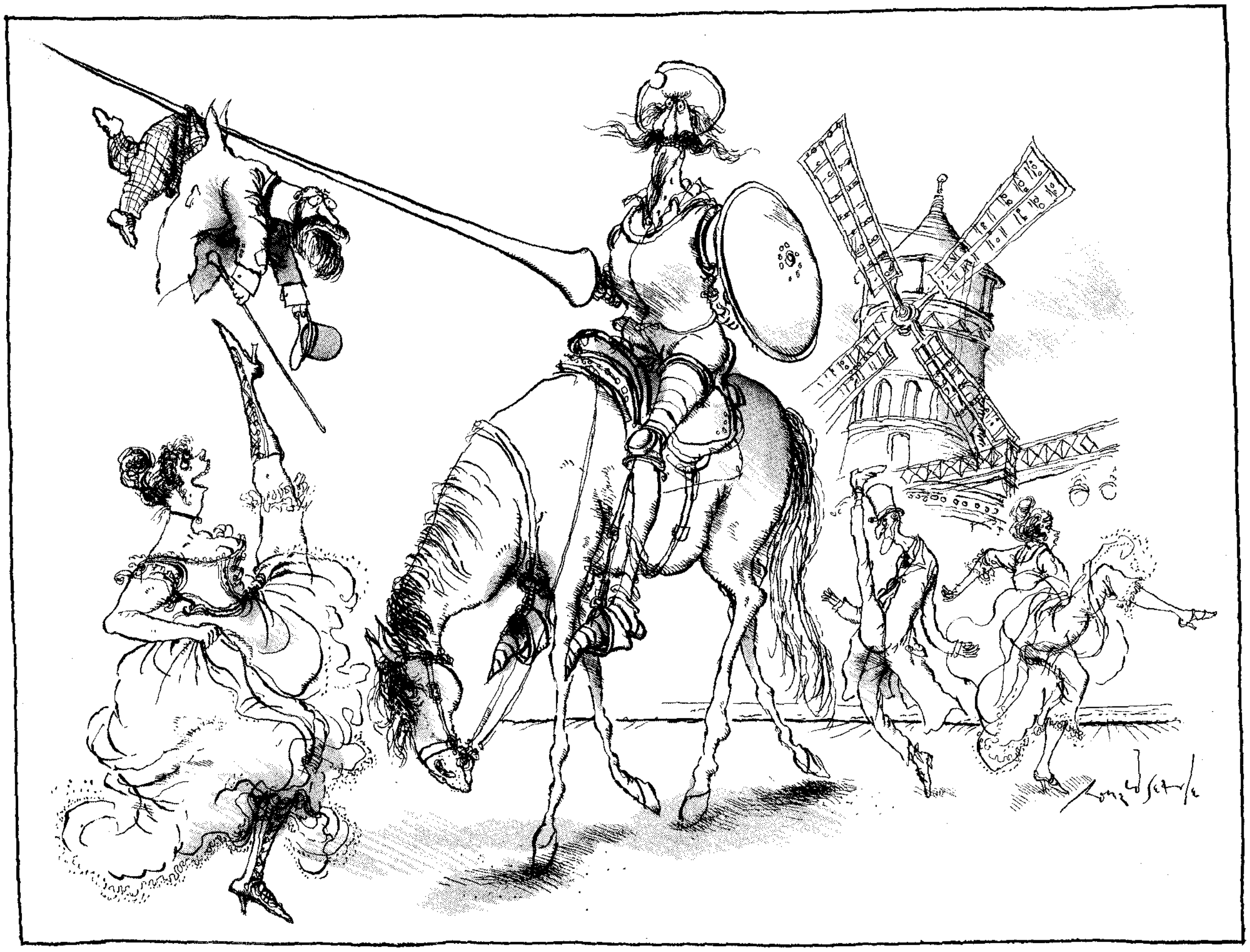
Travis looked at me, all puzzled, like what did that have to do with it?

MAUSER and Travis had reached a kind of stalemate. Their horns were locked, and as they stared into each other's eyes they pawed themselves deeper into the earth. Mauser had the edge some days, and Travis's purchase on their turf improved on others. From the outside, the match seemed hardly even; you had to know the background. The firm itself, general road improvement and construction, belonged to Jack Mauser, a huge, flat-stomached Welsh-German. Dressing down employees on the work site, he combined the drama of a Richard Burton delivery with raw Teutonic rage. His angers were explosive and foul, much feared, although his good favor was avidly sought as well.

Mauser was a fair-minded man, but he had a streak of irrational vulnerability: he adored his one sister in the world, Rhonda, pampered her as though she made up for the wife and children that he didn't have. She'd married Travis, a laid-back good-time boy with high-school basketball trophies rusting on top of the TV, and girlfriends, lots of those. Rhonda wor-



"It's time now for me to say good night. You've been a wonderful audience, and thanks for coming. Till we meet again, so long for a while, that's all the songs for a while. Good night, good night, everybody!"



CROSSED PATHS

Toulouse-Lautrec Meets Don Quixote

• •

shipped him nonetheless, and she had to be protected. At least Travis worked where Mauser could keep an eye on him; there was no question of firing the man. And so Travis became as much a part of things as anyone, even though his only job was to haul gravel, asphalt, sand, whatever was needed. Travis worked with false eagerness, expending a lot of visible energy, jumping in and out of the cab, kicking tires, talking long and hard. But by the end of the day, without fail, he had always hauled by many tons the least amount. He would not have lasted a week anywhere but at Jack Mauser's. His brother-in-law knew this fact, and hated it.

THE candy-apple-red Cadillac that was, besides Rhonda, the only thing in this world that Mauser truly loved raised a gray plume of dust that hung in the air and turned a ruddy pink, reflecting the morning sky. Sunrises in the dry autumn west of Sioux Falls were spectacular. We saw them all. At Mauser's, everybody, even the payroll clerks, started work at 7 A.M. and went until whenever. The push was on. There was so much to do before snow and the first hard frost. It was the best time of the year in many ways for Jack Mauser, who forced his Caddie to feats of quick driving and exhorted, managed, raged from site to site, screaming at what was yet to be done as contract deadlines approached. For Travis, of course, this time of year was the worst. No one around him had time to shoot the shit. There was an overriding panic in the air, an aura of strain. No one had time to sit and smoke or to drink a Pepsi from the cooler on the passenger's side of Travis's truck. People kept their ears cocked, their heads turned. Mauser could spin out of nowhere, at any time, a streak of dire color. Charges had been brought against him two years ago—assault and battery on an employee over a minor slipup in the gravel-to-sand mixture. It was not just the drama of his rage people feared; it was the actuality of Jack Mauser's temper, the rock of his fists, the pleasure that anger gave him.

I did my job well, so I never ran foul of him. He and Travis could kill each other and be done with it, for all that I cared at the time.

My office was at the far end of a trailer. I practically had my own bathroom, and nobody bothered me past nine, which is when I shut my door to drink a cup of tea with honey and stare into the screen of my computer. It was maybe noon, a day I was far into the payroll, when the trailer bounced on its

A SPARROW HAWK IN THE SUBURBS

At that time of year there is
a turn in the road where
the hermit tones and meadow colors of
two seasons heal into
one another,

when the wild ladder of a winter scarf is
stored away in a drawer eased by
candle grease, and lemon balm
is shaken out from
the linen press.

Those are afternoons
when the Dublin hills are
so close, so mauve and blue we can be
certain dark will bring rain and
it does, to

the borrowed shears
and the love seat in the garden, where
a sparrow hawk was seen through the opal-
white of the apple trees
after Easter and

all I can tell you is
how quickly those days of bloom went
by; when rumors of wings and sightings—
always seen by someone else
somewhere else—

filled the air,
together with a citrus drizzle of
petals and shadows waiting on
a gradual lengthening in the light
children stay up

later with, reading
their fables of blade-shanked wolves
and dragons, and learning to measure
the sanctuary of darkness by
a small danger.

They chilled into
these April nights I lie awake listening for
wings I will never see above the last
frosts and cold frames of
our back gardens.

—Eavan Boland

• •

concrete blocks and Travis walked into my room.

"Can I be straight with you?" he asked.

"Not if you want your paycheck."

"I don't care about that. Here."

He took a short chain from his pocket, bent forward, took my wrist, and snapped it on. There was a charm attached to the bracelet, a little silver bird. I looked at the thing as it rested on my wrist. It was the kind of gesture that just stops you. In the moment of my hesitation Travis leaned over and put his lips right where a doctor takes your pulse. I spread my fingers wide and pushed his face away.

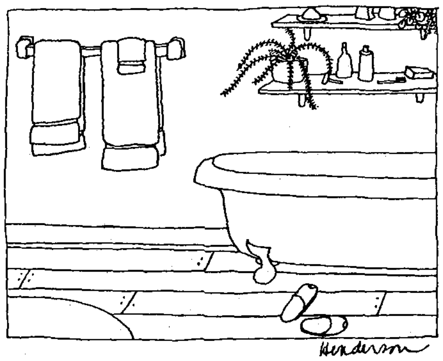
"Get out of here," I said.

But I kept the charm. Remember, I'd just been burned by a man without any. It helped to have Travis, so attractive on the outside, turn his attentions to me. People don't change, I told myself, so don't expect more. If he's flirting behind his wife's back, he will do the same to you.

"This thing was stamped like a million others from a piece of tin," I told myself that night when I took it off. The next morning, before work, I put it back on. I am not kidding when I say my former boyfriends had not been all that attractive. I go for the unusual in men, and people with good looks get generalized early in life, too well defined to have any character of interest. I need character. You see, I am a person you cannot tell had surgery. Had teeth fixed. Worked very hard at looking nice. It sharpens you, growing up as the last person anyone ever noticed in a classroom. I guess I looked down on pretty people, and I know that I was right about that if Travis was an example.

Look how empty: he was living off his wife's brother's good will. At the same time he was making moves on me. Look how vain: when he knew Mauser wasn't anywhere in range he would kill the engine of his truck, get out, stretch. He always did this in front of my window in the accounts trailer. He made sure to stand within a woman's gaze, because it magnified him, warmed him. He fed, like a bee on syrup, on female admiration.

Given all that, why did I find myself thinking about Travis? Why, the day before Mauser came around to check the weights and measurements and sign the paychecks, did I protect Travis? Without letting him know, I changed his tonnage. I made him look useful. It was a kind of insurance that he would be kept on. I did this even though I knew that the yellow copy of the unchanged original was already over in the files in Sioux Falls. Files that sat around in cardboard boxes or served as coffee tables, true, but files that were accurate records.



It got bad. I would wake up in the middle of the night, hungry. I had two rooms. I would walk into the other and open the refrigerator and stare into the cold, bright box, thinking of Travis Houpart. Those deep-brown eyes, sad, but of course I would light them up. Those smooth arms taut with muscle. How did he get strong? He never lifted anything.

I was reaching for the milk one night, a glass to calm me down and put me back to sleep, when the phone rang. I let it ring. But it sounded so loud, so unreal, that I picked it up and held the receiver carefully to my ear.

"Please, I've got to see you."

"Fine," I said. "Tomorrow."

My voice shook as I put the receiver down. I waited. It rang again.

"No," said Travis. "I want to see you now."

WAS it like I thought it would be? Worse—it was better. For me, those nights were like floating before you've learned how to swim. As long as I held my breath and stretched out my arms and legs, I stayed up. But when I needed to breathe I sank in a swirl of panic.

"I'm not the kind of person who can afford to get hurt," I told Travis.

ON LINE AT
THE FOUNTAIN OF ADULTHOOD
Watch as much TV as I want...
Wear high heels...
Attend wild and yet extremely glamorous parties every night...
Buy a Maserati, drive like a bat out of hell...
Marry Michael J. Fox...
Eat ten chocolate cakes if I feel like it...

He murmured, turned toward me in a sleep I thought was fake. I leaned over him and pinned his arm down and spoke into his face.

"Don't hurt me."

"What the hell do you mean? You're hurting *me*."

Did I visualize Travis ditching Rhonda, and him and me joining till death did us part? Did I pretend this role was satisfying? Did I need so little? Maybe I just wanted the chance to leave somebody first for once, to have the pleasure and not the illusions. They were there all the same, though; somehow I'd got it into my head that I meant something to this guy. Because it can happen. Clichés in love songs. Roses, violets, little tin birds. Sometimes you can't think fast enough to keep them from getting to you.

I was in my office around ten, waiting for the boss. I heard the steps, the door opened, but it was Travis with a can of cold soda pop in his hand.

"What do you want?"

I was nervous, shut the door behind him.

Travis put the can on my desk and then came around the side to pick me up. He wanted to put me on the desk top, too. But I can make myself heavier than I look, and I slumped down, unwilling. He tried to pull me up, to push me, but it was lots of trouble, and he started to pant with the effort.

"Come on. Help," he said.

I laughed, then I heard the set of steps that for sure were Mauser's, and I twisted sideways. "Let go."

He didn't. He held me in front of him and put his hands on me, looking over my shoulder in expectation, and that was when I saw he had decided on the spur of the moment to use me to get to Mauser. I was a prop, a plastic blow-up companion, a partner easily disposed of. His real relationship was not with me, or maybe any woman, but with Mauser. Like a dad to him. Like a brick wall.

The door opened. I punched my fists against Travis so hard he grinned. Then I kicked. At once, Travis fell away, doubled over in the corner of the room. I whirled around, but the door had shut, and already I could hear the red Cadillac accelerating. I didn't look at Travis. I sat down at my desk and rubbed my arms. They felt bruised and sore, and I was tired, so very tired. A wave of sleep washed over me, the sudden urge to sink against the desk, and it was all I could do to keep sitting upright.

"Come on." Travis stood behind me. "It was a joke."

He put his hands on my shoulders, began to knead the muscles of my back. He leaned over, put his hand on the desk for balance. I stapled it. Or I mean I tried to, because of course I was too awkward to really get his hand under the black handle of the instrument. He backed off.

"That was a joke, too," I said.

Jack Mauser fired me fair and square, I'll give him that. Two days went by and I thought perhaps he had been able to accept what only became true at the last possible moment: that I was resisting advances. He went back through the files, however, and found the figures that I'd falsified in Travis's favor. The notice was on my desk on Thursday morning: "Be gone by one." I left at eleven. I was on the road leading from the site when I saw Travis's truck approaching. I could see it clearly. The cab was yellow and green—crop colors, garish.

I have a small car, a compact, but I moved into the middle of the road. I'm not so different from Mauser. When I love someone, that's it. You can drive me past a limit, too. This feeling had been building in me for the past two days, a wild fever that made me throw things at the wall and slam the door of my refrigerator so hard the seal popped. Now everything felt right. This was the moment, I decided. Travis had had things too easy in life so far. I jammed my foot on the gas, and kept going. The colors of his truck blurred. The road went by. Fields. Then we were too close. The grille of the truck loomed and Travis laid on the horn. I kept my hands steady on the wheel, locked my ankle, and Travis took the ditch with a full load of gravel.

He hung up on the far incline. I saw this once I'd stopped and remembered to breathe. I got out and walked back. He'd been travelling slow enough to negotiate the declivity, but the ground was soft where water had collected a month ago, and at once his back wheels sank into the hard muck just enough to keep him where he was, so that he could not escape from Mauser's Cadillac, spinning its plume out at a distance and approaching fast.

Travis got out and we looked at each other across the ditch. There was plenty of time to talk, but not enough to think of what to say. We saw Mauser screaming from his open window, and then, at the crossroad, he drove down into the shallow ditch. He rode its dry edges carefully, straddling the bottom until he got to Travis's truck and swung right up beside it on the driver's side. He jumped out with a crowbar in his fist.

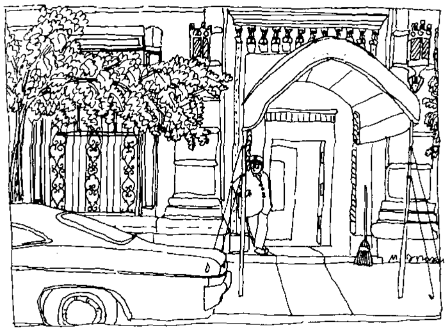
"Gun it out, fuckhead."

You see a thunderhead building in the sky, a blistering rose color. You see boot-camp sergeants in bad movies. Mauser's rage was a combination. It was a natural disaster mixed with dumb old saws. It was dangerous. His voice popped and sang in three pitches. His face went purple and his neck bulged from the collar of his shirt. He puffed up like a bullfrog. Then he snapped.

Travis jumped into the cab and restarted the engine, but his wheels spun the ruts deeper. He tried rocking backward, but he was too heavy. He tried forward, but the nose of the truck was at too steep a pitch. And as he worked, Mauser swung the bar in the air, stamped his feet, and yelled so hard it looked like he'd split in half. I edged back to my car. I leaned against the rear window, and stayed, so I saw it all clearly. I saw the thought enter Travis's desperate head. I saw him think that he was simply too heavy. I saw him start the dump. The dump bed went up, but the tailgate had banged shut and did not release, so that the load, instead of flooding out the back, collected there. And slowly—I could see it happen—the weight began to lift the front wheels right up off the ground.

Mauser hopped in the air, shrieked like the noon whistle, but the loud whine of the hydraulic dump in Travis's ears seemed to hypnotize him. Up, up the truck went, until the gravel began to course over the rim of the sides, and then it was too late for everything. We all saw it at the same moment, I suppose, though only Mauser moved. He leaped to the passenger's-side door of the truck, and lifted his bar to break the window, but couldn't balance right as the truck settled back on its haunches and in slow motion listed sideways, groaning. Its shadow began to edge over the Cadillac parked snug against it. Then the truck went with its own weight and toppled the rest of the way, crushing the car.

Suddenly Mauser stood on top of the door, which was a solid floor beneath his feet. He looked down. Through the glass he must have seen Travis, looking back up at him, and beneath him the buckled roof of clear red. Things gave deep in the Cadillac's interior, perhaps the wheel or the glove-leather seats. There was a thud, a series of smaller thunks, gentler sounds than that first awful noise of metal crumpling. I guess it was the smallness of the sound that stopped Mauser. He stood on the pile of truck and man caught inside and flattened car underneath. Then he straightened up and looked around, as though he'd climbed there just to get the view. He squinted at the horizon, which was empty and quiet beyond the edge of the field. When Travis began to thrash around below him, pounding to get out, Mauser bent over with the crowbar. I thought he was going to pull his brother-in-law out, save him if only to beat him up. But instead of breaking in the window, Mauser pried the handle off the door. Then he climbed down off the cab of the truck and walked toward me.



Halfway to where I waited, he threw the iron bar down in the yellow grass. He kept the door handle in his hand, though, as if something would attach to it, and when we stood across from one another he extended the handle to me, as if it was up to me to make sense of what had happened.

"Is he O.K.?" I asked.

He took the door handle back, then nodded his big, rough head.

"Not a scratch."

He walked around to the passenger's side of my car. We both got in at the same time, and I began to drive away from the accident. When we stopped at the four-way light in town, I looked at Mauser for directions, and he looked back at me, giving none. So we idled there. One car and then another went around us, honking, and still we looked at each other for a clue.

"You feel sorry for him? Think I should go back?"

"No," I said. "Of course not. He was a mistake."

"O.K. Pull over there. I'm hungry."

He pointed to a seafood quick-stop. Obedient, I switched lanes and pulled in. About that time, I must have gotten tired of them all, because when the drive-up intercom wasn't working right I said to Mauser, "You get out. You give the order. You're the voice of authority."

He was a man of solid worth and deep attachments, Mauser. He had a temper, but I didn't have to fear it anymore. I just drove off. I was beginning to like this new habit of leaving men in odd positions. Last I saw, he was talking earnestly to a square of beige plastic under a sign that advertised the fried things you could eat that were trawled from the sea.

—Louise Erdrich

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WE DON'T WANT TO HEAR ABOUT IT DEPARTMENT

[*Headline in the Chesapeake Bay* (*Md.*) *Banner*]

SHORE HOME CARE SERVES
NEWBORNS TO THE ELDERLY

ANNALS OF EXPLORATION

THE WHITE GODDESS OF THE WANGORA

ONE of the last of the Great White Hunters died in Berlin in 1967, at the age of eighty-six. Hans Hermann Schomburgk had been a member of that exclusive club of safari-going, game-slaughtering European gentlemen who roamed Africa from the late nineteenth century until the twilight of the colonial era; he had long enjoyed a reputation among Africa hands for his bush knowledge and his hunting prowess—he had killed sixty-three elephants, a number, he claimed, surpassed only by the legendary Selous. But his real celebrity, paradoxically, came when he turned from blood sports to photographic safaris; it was the films Schomburgk made about Africa, and the books he wrote, that insured him his wide renown with the German public as a hunter, explorer, and Africanist.

In the course of a nearly fifty-year career as a filmmaker, Schomburgk led photographic safaris into East, West, and Southern Africa, working almost always in tropical heat and in remote locations. In interviews and in his books he usually dated his filmmaking career from a documentary, "Mensch und Tier im Urwald" ("Man and Animal in the Primeval Forest"), that he had made in Liberia during 1922 and 1923, but from time to time he referred in passing to a filmmaking expedition that had taken place a decade earlier. Schomburgk was extremely proud of his film achievements, and it is puzzling that he consistently saw fit to ignore his single most noteworthy enterprise—an expedition he undertook in 1913 to the German West African colony of Togoland, to make not only documentaries, in which he later came to specialize, but the first true dramatic feature films ever shot in Africa.

Born in 1880 into an old Hamburg family, Hans Schomburgk received his initiation into African bush life at the age of seventeen, when his parents sent him to a relative's farm in South Africa, with the idea that he might establish a farm of his own there. Having ascertained immediately upon his arrival that farming was an occupation that held no appeal for him whatever, he devoted his energies to the realization of a childhood dream of being an explorer, and used the money that had been given to him for farm equipment to finance his first safari. The next year, Schomburgk, who is said to have spoken English "like a native," enlisted in the British Natal Mounted Police—a military, not a civil, force—and soon saw action in the Boer War, for which he was decorated with the Queen's Medal with Four Clasps. In 1901, he joined the North Rhodesian Police, also a military force, and served until 1904, when he left for his first extended expedition. From 1910 to 1911, he was chief geographer in Liberia and held the rank of major, and in 1912 he was the temporary military attaché for Liberia at its mission in London.

All told, Schomburgk was based in Africa for seventeen years, during which he conducted many lengthy safaris—one, from Victoria Falls to Dar es Salaam, by way of Angola and the Congo Free State, took him five years—and he twice crossed the continent on foot. In the course of his travels, he made a number of significant, if unsensational, contributions to African lore: in 1907, for instance, he discovered a freshwater mussel, *Mutela hargeri schomburgki*, and thereby helped to establish the fact that Lake Bangweulu, in Zambia, was a true lake, and not merely a flooded plain; and in 1911, in Liberia, he rediscovered the pygmy hippopotamus, thought to be extinct. The following year, in recognition of his work in Africa, Schomburgk was made a Fellow of the British Royal Geographical Society, perhaps the distinction in which he took most pride.

The story of how Schomburgk first became interested in film was one that he himself never tired of telling, and it became a set piece. "It was in the year 1906 in the Congo-*Urwald*, where my friend Captain Hemming and I had been shut off from the world for over a year," he recalled in a 1950 newspaper interview. "Finally the post came [by runner]. In the newspapers from home we read of film. '*Ja*,' we said to each other, 'if we could only show all that we see here every day!' Film-fever had seized me."

Over the years, Schomburgk referred repeatedly to his preoccupation with film as a "sickness," conveying the impression that from the moment of his discovery of the medium he had been obsessively driven to share Africa's secrets with the world. But film proved to be more than a means of disclosure. Most of the Dark Continent had been "discovered" by the time of his peregrinations, and—respectable scientific contributions notwithstanding—anyone who dreamed, as he did, of becoming an explorer in the old, grand tradition was hard put to find unclaimed soil. Filmmaking allowed Schomburgk to play the role of explorer while retreading familiar territory and, in addition, brought him fame by indirectly casting him in the role of a White Hunter.

Schomburgk's appearance was tailor-made for these roles. He had an athletic, lithe physique and cut a striking figure in jodhpurs and riding boots, and his cool, blond good looks evoked something of the taciturn self-containment popularly attributed to the solitary adventurer. Schomburgk was a complex character: not only personable and charismatic, and a great womanizer, capable at all ages of manifesting a devastating charm (by the time of the Togoland trip, he had married and divorced the first of four wives), but, at the same time, a man of extreme reserve, who was genuinely at home in the loneliness of the African bush.

A brief encounter in Dar es Salaam with a German filmmaker named Schumann, who was filming there and working from a darkroom he had set up in an Arab acquaintance's deserted cellar, represented Schomburgk's total experience with film when, on returning to Europe in 1909, he set about preparing himself for his new career; in fact, until then he had never seen a moving picture in a cinema. His training, typical of those early days, can euphemistically be called "informal," consisting for the most part of gleaning odds and ends of information from studios in Hamburg and London, to which he had access through personal contacts. There was in any case little that the studios could teach him about filming in the tropics, and the most essential part of his schooling did not begin until he was actually working on location.

Very few films of any kind had been made in the African hinterland before Schomburgk set out on his Togoland expedition. The only previous undertaking comparable to his dramatic work was something entitled, variously, "The Great Kimberley Diamond Robbery" and "The Star of the South," which had been released in South Africa in 1911 without making a memorable impression—probably, one film historian has hazarded, because of its amateurish production. This film, moreover, was hardly expeditionary, for it had been filmed on the banks of the Vaal River just outside Johannesburg, which by 1911 was a bustling city of nearly a quarter of a million. Indeed, dramatic films shot on "exotic" locations anywhere in the world were extremely unusual at this early date. But Schomburgk's Togoland films are of interest for reasons other than their importance to film history. Africa has traditionally given the European an opportunity to cast himself in the role of his choice without, as it were, undergoing the usual auditions, and in this respect Schomburgk's project, carried out against the backdrop of Africa's scenery, and using its people as extras, literally embodied a longstanding European fantasy.

Schomburgk's Togoland expedition was actually a continuation of an aborted cinematographic venture he had undertaken the year before, as a commission from Carl Hagenbeck, the founder of the famous Hagenbeck's Zoo, outside Hamburg, for whom Schomburgk had collected pygmy hippopotamuses. Schomburgk's original intention had been to make ethnological films in Liberia; he had set out in 1912, accompanied by a cameraman named Georg

Victoria Roberts

"Haven't I seen you on 'Adam Smith's Money World'?"

"Dorothy, I'm bored."

Bürli and also—in deference to the spirit of the prototypical expeditions conducted before the advent of photography—by an artist, a young man named Kay Nebel. En route to Liberia, they took the opportunity of a ten-day layover in Las Palmas to shoot and develop some trial footage. The results were good, and Schomburgk was satisfied that he and his cameraman could cope with the problems presented by working in tropical light and heat. In Liberia, they shot several thousand feet of film "with an indefatigable zeal"—so Schomburgk recalled in one of his books—before moving on to Togoland. The undeveloped film was shipped back to Europe in batches.

It was in Togoland that Schomburgk received by telegram the shattering news that the developed negatives were "completely underexposed and unclear"; less than a sixth of the exposed film was salvageable, and that fraction contained little of interest. Schomburgk and Bürli abruptly returned to Europe, leaving Nebel, at his own request, to look after their remaining stores and await further orders at a government station called Sokodé, some weeks' journey inland from the Togolese capital, Lomé.

In London, Schomburgk served a second brief but intensive apprenticeship in one of the friendly studios, and learned that the appearance of underexposure was the result of a fading process, primarily heat-induced, that could be checked only by developing the film immediately after its exposure. (The reason for the lack of image definition he did not discover until he was back on location: his cameras, which were of wood, had been warped so badly by the tropical heat that their lenses had become difficult to focus.) Schomburgk at once set about making arrangements to develop future exposed footage on the spot, and began putting together a four-member team for a second expedition. His overriding need was for a new cameraman, as Bürli had, among other things, neglected to tell him before they went to Africa that the sum of his photographic experience had been in still photography. Through friends in the small circle that constituted the London film world in 1913, Schomburgk made the acquaintance of a cameraman named James Samuel Hodgson, and took him on.

Hodgson was then just twenty-two, a darkly handsome Englishman, whose strong features gave some hint of the relentless determination that characterized him. He had grown up poor in North London and had left school when he was twelve. At fifteen, he began working in the processing laboratory of the pioneer film company Warwick Trading, and four years later he was hired as a cameraman by Gaumont Graphic, the first regular British newsreel. He soon moved on to Pathé Frères, and spent the next three years with that company, covering events like industrial strikes and horse races.

The difficult circumstances of Hodgson's childhood, combined with his intense pride, had forged an aggressive, competitive personality and heightened powers of observation. Resourceful and rarely daunted, Hodgson was an almost ideal choice for the task at hand. He had one shortcoming: he did not speak German, which was the only European language generally spoken in Togoland at that time.

The third member of the team was to be Nebel, the artist, who had dutifully remained at his post during the months of Schomburgk's absence. Nebel, who was twenty-four, had the clear, fresh, golden good looks of an Aryan poster boy—sunny looks that belied an unflinching self-discipline and single-mindedness, which could lead him at times to fall into moods of depression and rage. He grew up in Kappeln, in Schleswig-Holstein, the eldest of ten children. His artistic talent became evident early, and though his family discouraged his artistic ambitions, he was fortunate enough to find a local patron, and so was able to study art in Hamburg and later in Berlin and Paris. When the possibility of taking part in the Schomburgk expedition came his way, he had just returned from a trip to Italy to study the paintings of Uccello, whose muscular pageantry fascinated him. He was attracted to Africa in part by romantic notions of the Noble Savage and the Untamed Wilderness.

Almost immediately after returning to Europe, Schomburgk had made the daring resolution to undertake dramatic films on his return to Africa, in addition to the ethnological films he had originally planned. His incentive was less artistic than commercial. A dramatic feature film, made in an authentically African setting and starring a cast of naked "savages," would, he was sure, be swept up eagerly by the popular market. Although Schomburgk himself was ready to take on the role of the leading man in his dramatic productions, it was clear that he would require a leading lady. "My thoughts at once reverted to Miss Gehrts," he later wrote, "a lady with whom I have been acquainted for some little while, and whom I knew to be a keen sportswoman, a good rider, and possessed of histrionic ability of no mean order." The lady in question was easily persuaded to undertake the venture, her parents less easily so, owing to their fears, as Schomburgk observed with his characteristic sang-froid, concerning "the supposed dangers and privations which they assumed—not altogether wrongly—to be inseparable from the trip."

Emma Auguste Gehrts, known as Meg, was the twenty-two-year-old daughter of a solidly comfortable upper-middle-class Hamburg family: the father's merchant career was successful enough to provide his seven sons and daughters with the music and riding lessons essential to the *gutbürgerliche* class. Meg was an attractive young woman—slender, with long dark-blond hair and an engaging, if somewhat heavy-featured, face, and intelligent, penetrating eyes. On the basis of reports from family members, it seems likely that Schomburgk first met Meg either at a party or while out riding in Hamburg.

Although Schomburgk may well have observed the histrionic ability of his future leading lady, there is no evidence that she had so far had any opportunity to make use of it in a professional capacity. It is possible, however, that he detected in Meg's vivacity signs of exceptional energy and optimism—qualities that would be necessary during the six-month odyssey that lay ahead. In any event, from the point of view of posterity Schomburgk's choice was a fortunate one, for, while invaluable and compelling information about the expedition is to be had from Schomburgk's glancing references to it in his books and newspaper interviews, from an unpublished memoir by Hodgson, from Nebel's personal correspondence, and from film reviews, plate negatives, and movie stills, the single complete, detailed account was written by Meg Gehrts.

A WALK WITH AN ABSTRACT EXPRESSIONIST

1

Only the slightest touch
and the clicketing silver balls
slide into a crack in the floor,
as if they were mercury: Quick.
They're heavy. It slants.
The "beautiful" silver balls
nevertheless.

2

Shattered Braque never made
an analytical portrait
but put round crowns
on a man's hat, curls
on a broken woman: not
black lines alone but
recognizable eyes.

3

The smart brother Picasso had
allowed himself to dismantle
the living girl before,
as if in a visual game,
this part then that,
and when war came
knew how.

4

The desire to think in words
or full sentences again.
A noun, a verb—an object,
as if prepared to
be clear. "Restraint is a
virtue. Repression's
a problem."

5

How hard to use "I" and "you"
to speak of desire.
Better red, a black, a splash
of another effort, the
off-gold. You're right.
You knew the age
and its tenor.

6

Art, of course, displaying reality
once it's been burned. The blue is ash
like a life. What is most
brazen and true is hardest to take.
Now I can turn my back on you
in the museum, agreeing,
in theory.

7

It's only paint like a camera
taking pictures of people
who did not survive misfortune.
As if there were no right thing.
Like you, I feared and believed
my unconscious
too well.

—ELIZABETH MACKLIN

• •

"A CAMERA ACTRESS IN THE WILDS OF TOGOLAND" was written—in English—shortly after the expedition's return to England, in 1914, and was published in London the following year. Though it includes competent exposition of the usual geographical and anthropological material, it is by no means a typical travel narrative. The book's tone and singular point of view are revealed in its opening paragraphs, in which Miss Gehrts ingenuously announces that her work is "a creation born—to be perfectly and absolutely frank—of egoism and flattered vanity," qualities unambiguously evident throughout the first chapter, which deals ostensibly with the expedition's long voyage from Dover to Lomé, but manages to subordinate mere details of the trip, such as the landscape and shipboard life, to an account of the agreeable impression the author made on her fellow-voyagers: "We played the usual ship's games, sang, talked, and I am afraid that most of us, old as well as young, married and single, flirted a little bit. I soon gathered round me quite a small circle of friends. They were mostly men friends, but this was not exactly my fault. An actress is an actress. *Que voulez-vous?*"

DANGER
SLIPPERY
ROAD AHEAD
S.

Miss Gehrts's naïveté and self-absorption insured that her narrative included those incidents which captured her real attention, rather than just the traditional themes of an adventurous expedition, and so it provides novel

"The whole nine yards?"

• •

insights of real value. She develops an empathy with African women, for example, and makes frequent, often sharp comparisons between their lot in life and that of their European "sisters." (Her interest in the women had practical consequences, too, for it was she who encouraged Schomburgk to include footage of the African woman's daily tasks along with sequences of the more "picturesque" aspects of African traditional life.) Toward the end of her book is a chapter entitled "A Woman 'Palaver.' " "Men may skip it, if they like," Meg says briskly, and adds, "Women, I venture to think, will find it interesting." It contains a summary of the knowledge she gained from "many long and confidential talks" with African women in her tent, and also deals briefly with "caravan life and cookery from a white woman's point of view"—information that she hopes will prove useful to "any other woman who may in future visit the West African hinterland under circumstances similar to those in which I found myself."

In the long run, Meg's spunky good nature prevails over her undeniable vanity, and wins the reader to her side—and, in any case, much may be forgiven her solely for the intimate glimpses she affords us of the drama of the expedition itself. For example, her account of the inconvenient departure without notice of Messa, the expedition cook, offers a privileged insight into the decidedly unheroic behavior of a Great White Hunter:

> Gloomily we marched to the next camp, and I could hear Schomburgk grumbling to himself at intervals whenever I got near enough to him, which was not often. "No cook! Whatever shall we do? And Messa was a good cook. A better one I never had. And good cooks cannot be picked up in the bush like paw-paws." And so on, and so on.
>
> We marched eighteen miles that morning, the longest stage we had done so far, then halted for breakfast.
>
> "Sardines and crackers!" sneered Schomburgk.
>
> "For gracious sake go away somewhere for half an hour," I retorted hotly. "I'm going to run this chop."
>
> He picked up his gun, and strolled off into the bush—grumbling. I set to work to prepare breakfast. It was hard work to bring my self-imposed task to a successful issue, for I had only the most rudimentary cooking utensils, and an open fire.
>
> By dint of much labour and perseverance, however, I managed in the end to prepare a very decent dish of eggs and bacon, with hot rolls, and strong steaming coffee. Schomburgk grunted approval when he came to partake of it, and afterwards was quite genial, despite the affair of the missing Messa. "Feed the brute!" I forget the name of the tactful woman who first gave our sex that very excellent piece of advice, but she knew what she was talking about. She had studied men, and to some purpose.

LADEN with film equipment, brass rods and bright-colored calico for trading purposes, bags of salt for local wages, provisions from Harrods and Craxwell, and, in Hodgson's words, "a considerable amount of feminine baggage," the Schomburgk expedition set sail in the Henny Woermann from Dover, on August 26, 1913. After brief calls at Madeira, Tenerife, and Las Palmas, it arrived in Lomé in early September.

At the time, German Togoland consisted of a narrow splinter of land on the Slave Coast, squeezed between the Gold Coast and Dahomey. Over the years since its annexation, in 1884, it had become known as Germany's model colony. Revenues from scientifically cultivated cocoa, coffee, and cotton crops and a ruthlessly efficient system of taxation covered the costs of development and maintenance, which included an exemplary road system, three railway lines, the harbor, a telegraph and radio transmitter, and the highest level of educational development in Africa. (At the time of the Schomburgk expedition, ninety per cent of the colony's children attended school.) This model of efficiency had been constructed at a heavy cost to its inhabitants, however, given the German use of forced labor and a brutal penal system.

In colonial times, Lomé gained the reputation it has today, of being one of the most attractive towns in West Africa. Palms and flamboyant fig trees planted by the colonizers shaded broad streets of red earth, and neat two-story bungalows belonging to German officials were set in well-kept tropical gardens. Schomburgk and Hodgson were put up in official rest houses while Meg was given a room in the home of a Lieutenant von Rentzel and his family. The Governor of Togoland himself, His Highness the Duke Adolf Friedrich zu Mecklenburg, had issued instructions throughout the colony that

Schomburgk and his expedition were to be afforded every assistance; and, with the object of insuring that everything was absolutely *comme il faut*, Hodgson was awarded the temporary rank of captain for the duration of the safari, and provided with a stiff-collared uniform for official occasions.

The arrival of Schomburgk's party caused much excitement in the small town, and when word spread that Schomburgk had returned with a lady in tow there was much speculation as to how long she would last in the African bush. In Hodgson's case, only a uniform was required to convince the colony at large that an Englishman could be a German military captain, but there was apparently nothing capable of transforming "the dancing girl from Hamburg," which, Hodgson tells us, is how the German society ladies of Lomé referred to Meg, into a bona-fide actress, and, he noted, they "put the bar up" to her. For Meg, it seems, the one bright spot of this Lomé sojourn was an invitation to have tea at the Governor's house, along with Schomburgk and Hodgson.

An outbreak of yellow fever in Lomé hastened the expedition's departure for Kamina, the first government station "up country." A narrow-gauge railway line ran (and still runs) due north for just over a hundred miles to the village of Atakpamé. Since, despite wobbling open carriages, flies, and dust, the train ride was by far the easiest leg of the entire safari, Meg's reaction does not bode well: "Oh that railway journey! Shall I ever forget it? The dust and heat were awful, and owing to some unaccountable oversight, nobody had thought to lay in any provisions for the trip, which lasted from six o'clock in the morning till four in the afternoon."

Today, some two hours' drive north of Lomé the hill country around Atakpamé comes into view, blue in the distance, and in the rainy season lying under violet, thunderous-looking clouds. Here a mountainous amphitheatre contains the confusion of rust-colored mud-brick houses that makes up the modern town. A few miles to the east, down a dirt road that runs past fields of corn and manioc, is Kamina, an area of cleared and beaten earth, shaded by mango trees, typical of many market compounds except for a derelict stone building on its perimeter. The building still stands firm, and is approached by an unbroken flight of steps, but, stripped of doors, windows, and every object not part of its actual walls, it is now gutted and vacant. Some distance beyond, structures that look like tankless water towers rise here and there above a cornfield, and huge fallen iron girders lie amid the corn. A massive grid that suggests a grating placed over a dungeon lies near the entrance to a tunnel. All these objects—the stone building, the towers, the girders, and the grid—formed part of a wireless station that by 1914 was, incredibly, the largest in the world. Nine telegraph towers, ranging in height from two hundred and fifty to four hundred feet, had been built with local labor under the direction of Baron Codelli von Fahnenfeld, the commander of the station. It had direct connections with Berlin, and had been built by the Germans as a link in a chain of colonial stations that was meant eventually to girdle the earth. (The wireless station was completed in January of 1914, and while Schomburgk and his party were in Kamina toward the end of their return journey it received its first Morse message from Berlin.)

Since Kamina was linked to the coast by rail and road, European visitors were not a rarity, and the Baron had thoughtfully cleared the bush and established guest facilities—small round huts with earthen walls and grass roofs, which had camp beds inside and bucket showers outside and were surrounded by flowers. On the night the Schomburgk expedition arrived, the hospitable Baron held a memorable dinner, in an open, thatched dining hut, illuminated by acetylene motorbike lamps. The table was laid with damask and silver, and the meal was served by African retainers in white livery emblazoned with the Baron's crest. Meg's travel-worn spirits soared at the glitter of crystal and silver:

> Oh, how I enjoyed this my first real meal in the real heart of Africa! The memory of the taste of it lingers on my palate yet, even as I write. Nothing was lacking, nothing was *de trop*. The caviare was as good as the consommé, and both were perfect. . . . The wines, like the liqueurs, were just "it."

"Wishful to do honour" to her genial host, she had donned one of her "prettiest low-necked frocks" for the occasion, but was bitten so badly by mosquitoes that the Baron had to wrap her in the tablecloth.

AT Kamina, the filming of "The White Goddess of the Wangora" began. The outline of the story, which

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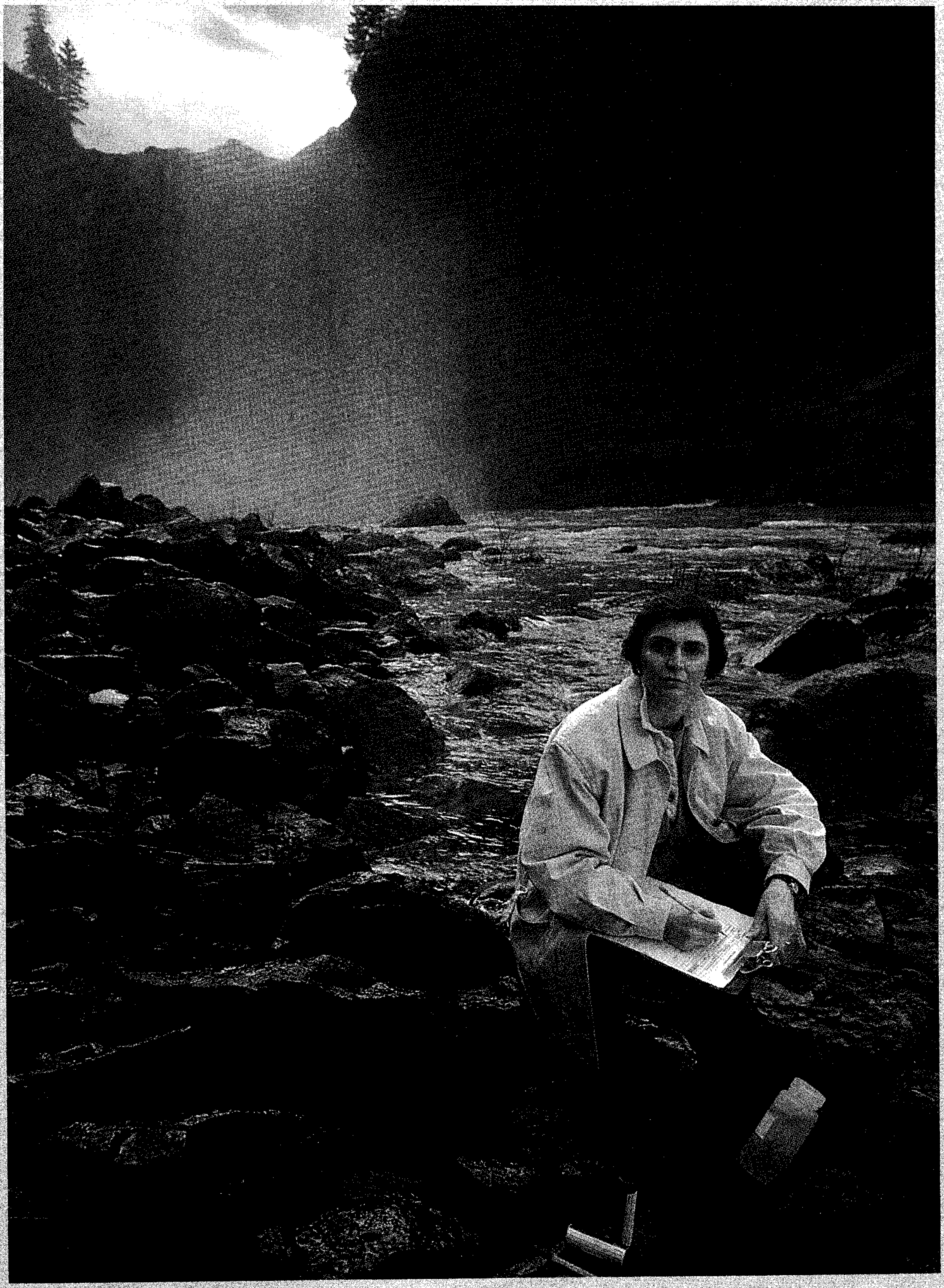

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had been suggested to Schomburgk by the editor of a film magazine in London, was summarized by Hodgson:

> Briefly the idea was that, some seventeen years before, a ship had been wrecked on [this] part of the coast. All were lost except a little white baby who was washed ashore in a packing case, found by the natives, brought up by them, reigned as a sort of queen, then is reclaimed by one of her own race in the person of a big game hunter who is captured by the natives and brought before her. [In Meg's synopsis, she is "naturally attracted to him"—a detail that Hodgson may have found unimportant but Meg clearly did not.] They escape together and reach a white settlement. Of course they had a terrible time in the bush but they made it all right and were married right regular and proper by the local padre, living in happy domestic bliss afterwards although we did not go into details after getting them married.

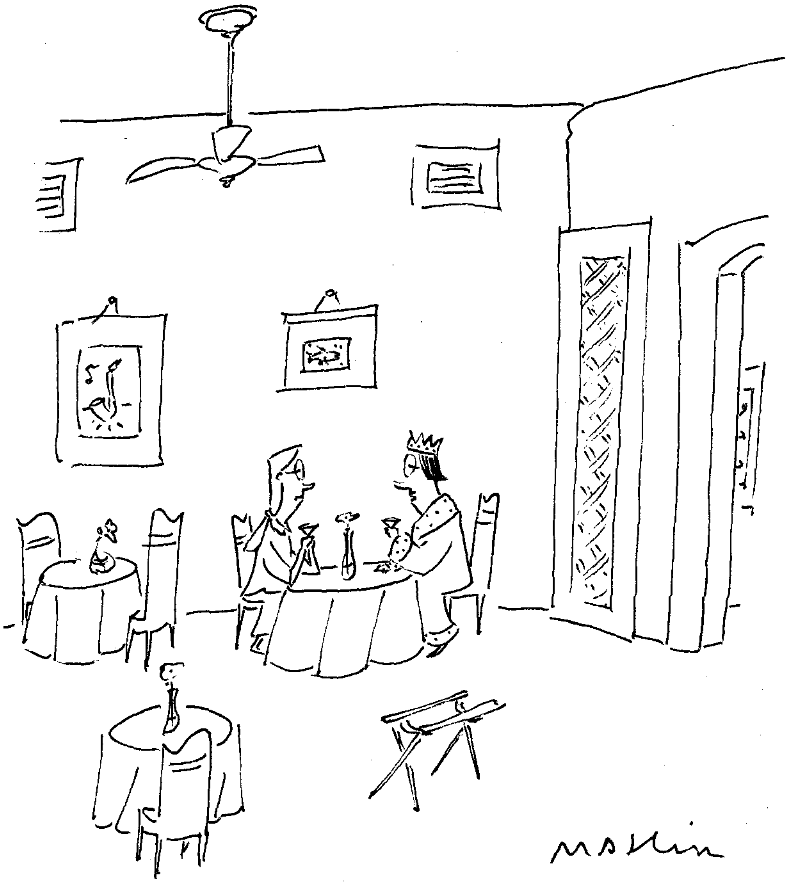
The opening scenes, involving the discovery and adoption of the shipwrecked baby by the tribe, had been reserved for the expedition's return to Lomé and its beach, but all the other scenes were filmed in the villages and the bush around Kamina.

A "studio" providing light for shooting interior scenes was quickly established by chopping a hut in half, and surviving photographs indicate that it was decorated with wall hangings of chevron-patterned palm matting, rugs of animal skins, and assorted "authentic" objects, such as baskets and a fly whisk. The major logistical problem was the rounding up of local extras to play the part of the Goddess's adoptive tribesmen—a task that required many weeks. Eventually, warriors from some twenty villages were mustered for what Schomburgk ambitiously envisaged as epic crowd and chase scenes. His work, however, did not end with the mere assembling of the cast; the various roles had to be carefully explained—through three translators, and many times over.

After weeks of long rehearsal sessions, all was at last ready for Meg to make her screen début, the shooting taking place not far, one supposes, from where the cornfields now lie. The first scenes shot were of the White Goddess's coming of age. The stills included in "A Camera Actress" show Meg, as the White Goddess, looking painfully young, in a sarong-like garment, with her shoulders and legs bare, and with a scarf bound over her long hair. She reclines against a papaw tree or lounges on a leopard skin inside a hut while being fanned by a young African girl who is naked except for a girdle of shells.

The camp of the White Hunter (whose name, one learns from the film magazine *Kinematograph*, was Dick Denver) had been carefully laid out in a clearing surrounded by tall grass, suitable for lurking hostile natives. The first scene set here opened with Schomburgk, who was playing the hero, sitting nonchalantly outside his tent. Eventually, he stood up and, after yawning and stretching, went inside, whereupon tribal warriors crept up and cut the tent ropes, thus trapping the hunter like a netted animal. The scene, according to Hodgson, was "rather too realistic," because the "natives"—generally so slow to understand what was demanded of them—had coöperated with suspect gusto. A brawl of sorts followed—not anticipated in the script—and when the camera stopped rolling Schomburgk stalked off, declaring that the scene *had* to work out, for he would not repeat it under any circumstances.

In the scenes that followed, the hunter was led by the warriors to their village and brought before their high priestess, Meg, dressed now in her strapless sarong and a turban, and sitting on what might have been a chief's chair, with a leopard skin at her feet, as she presided over a kneeling throng of hand-clapping villagers. (In a preserved still, her face is watchful but eager, precisely the right expression for someone falling in love with a man possessed of the strength and daring of a White Hunter.) The captured hunter, bound hand and foot, was then ignobly flung into a hut to await eventual sacrifice. From this point on, Meg had to rally herself to meet the somewhat alarming challenges of an increasingly demanding role. Having slipped into the hut and released the hunter from his bonds, the Goddess was called upon, in Meg's words, to "guide him in a wild flight for freedom over rocks and bushes, through foaming streams, and up hill and down dale." It was, she says, "the great scene of the play."



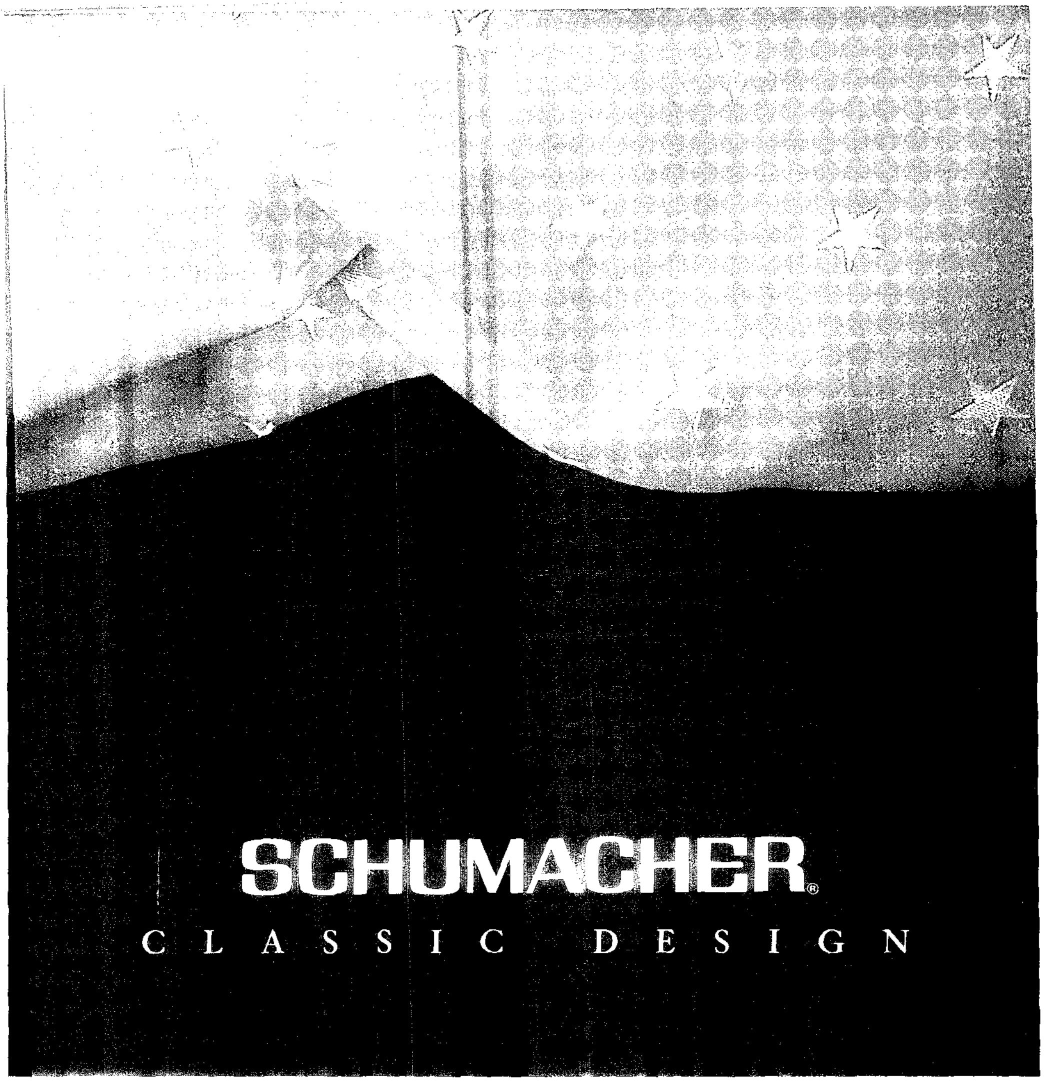
"I run a little kingdom just south of here about twenty miles. And you—what do you do?"

The great scene had presented grave difficulties during rehearsal. As Schomburgk had envisioned the flight to freedom, it would include some scenes of battle, in which members of the supporting cast would be required to "play dead"; unfortunately, local wisdom made little distinction between playing dead and being dead, and volunteers were not forthcoming. Finally, after a week of negotiations and discussions with a village chief and medicine man, Schomburgk succeeded in bribing one courageous warrior to set the precedent, and thereby prove that what was being asked was not a fatal act. This strategy worked well, and on the following morning Meg woke up to find a row of eight warriors lying on the ground outside her tent, auditioning, as it were, for what had quickly come to be seen as choice parts.

The shooting of the escape began at ten that morning, when the sun was already high, and by noon it had become so hot that Hodgson, Meg notes, "was unable to bear to touch with his ungloved hand the brass work of his machine." In the interests of art and dramatic realism, it had been deemed necessary for the leading lady to play her scene of wild flight in as advanced a state of undress as decency would allow. But sunburn and a belated attack of modesty prompted Meg to ask plaintively if she could not instead put on her bathing costume, "the latest from Berlin," which she had worn on the boat to the admiration of the male passengers—a request scornfully rejected by Hodgson. The filming of the scene took the entire day, at the end of which—her bare legs and arms torn by thorns and stung by insects, and her bare feet bitten by chiggers—the White Goddess collapsed with sunstroke. This was immediately followed by a bout of malaria.

For an old bush hand like Schomburgk, life at Kamina afforded, he said, the comforts of a Cook's Tour, and Hodgson seems to have been the kind of man who was happy in any circumstances in which he felt challenged. But the leading lady, even before her illnesses, had begun to show signs of being somewhat the worse for wear. The primitive conditions of the camp certainly had a lot to do with this. She complained that she lacked real privacy, since neither her loosely thatched hut nor her roughly screened shower satisfactorily shielded her from the villagers who "crowded in serried ranks" for a glimpse of the white woman. She was plagued by insects: flying cockroaches landed on her while she was having a shower, and swarms of mosquitoes left her feeling unbeautifully lumpy. But what she suffered from above all else was loneliness.

Meg Gehrts undoubtedly had many reasons for coming to Africa, but a reading between the lines of her narrative makes it safe to say that one of those reasons was Major Schom-



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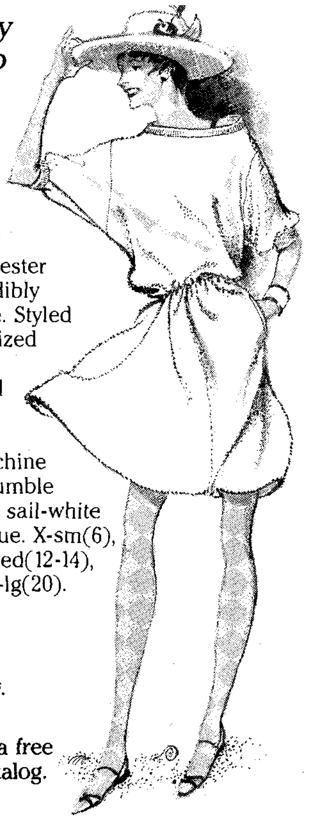

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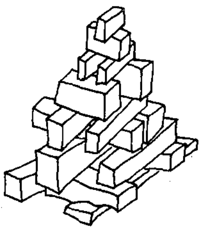
burgk. There is no knowing how much of his prodigious charm Schomburgk had thought it expedient to exert by way of insuring Meg's acceptance of his offer, but she may well have concluded that she would be more central to his interests than proved to be the case; Schomburgk, on this first undertaking of his new career, was overwhelmingly preoccupied with the necessities of the expedition. Most days, he and Hodgson were away from camp searching out material for their documentary films and negotiating with tribal leaders for coöperation in the filming, and at night they worked on their cameras or retired to their makeshift darkroom. All this, one has to imagine, meant that Schomburgk, who was in any case laconic by nature, did not turn out to be the agreeable and attentive companion that Meg Gehrts might have envisioned on the basis of her earlier acquaintance with him.

And there was another painful point: each member of the expedition had his or her own hut, and at Kamina—as at most of their camps—there filed at night through the quarters of Major Schomburgk a series of village girls. This activity was in marked contrast to Schomburgk's treatment of Meg's person; when, during the filming of "The White Goddess," her poor flesh had been so severely bitten by mosquitoes and stinging flies that she was covered with bumps and welts, Schomburgk, according to the amused Hodgson, had been "too shy, in spite of being a big game hunter, to attend to them," and it was Hodgson who ended up anointing Meg with medicinal balms. There are indications, too, that Schomburgk may have been finding his leading lady's ingenuousness a trifle irksome. To Meg's innocent inquiry, for example, made on her first day in the bush, concerning the whereabouts of a toilet his reply that "Africa is large" strikes one as unduly testy.



Although there is little in Meg's book to suggest that she was seriously unhappy, a darker picture emerges from other sources. Years after the expedition was over, Meg wrote, in German, a second, brief account of this safari, which was never published. More telling than any single statement is the tone of the entire document: a weary, guiltily reproachful voice that dredges up from the years less colorful events than those recorded in her book. In relating how her "boy" dug out with a stick the sand fleas that had burrowed into her bare feet during filming, for instance, she recalls, "I tried not to make a fuss about it as I wanted to be brave. I had my reasons, because 'the old Africanists'—Schomburgk, Codelli and the other Europeans at the station—did not respect my fear and inexperience." She also notes:

> The men had fun with me and teased me continuously.
>
> Once we were on a terrible ride crossing the burning steppe. . . . I tried to stop and have a rest, but Schomburgk came along and said, "That is what one gets for dragging women along to Africa."
>
> I stopped asking questions.

Meg occupied her non-working hours in the bush chiefly with needlework, and with learning to bicycle, for Schomburgk had ordained that bicycling would be the expedition's mode of transportation over the next stage of the journey, while they would still have the luxury of a road at their disposal. One solace seems to have been the company of the African women. "My nicest hours were those spent before my hut between four o'clock and dark," she wrote in her book. "Then I took my tea, and passed the time of day with the women and girls who came with huge calabashes on their heads to get water." Each night, she made a point of dressing for dinner in a silk or linen dress from London.

Despite these stratagems, it becomes clear that Meg Gehrts was a very unhappy woman. "I have never seen one woman before or since do so much weeping," Hodgson wrote in his memoir. Like Schomburgk, Hodgson was too preoccupied with responsibilities of his own to spare much concern for the leading lady, and his comment on Meg's tears is not sympathetic: "I got very much fed up with this human deluge."

Yet it was at Kamina that Meg recorded an extraordinary adventure. One moonlit night, while everyone else in the camp was asleep, some impulse led her out of doors and put it in her head to climb the tallest of the telegraph towers, which stood at close to four hundred feet. "I thought how beautiful the African landscape would look seen from the top under the light of the tropical moon," she writes. She made it a third of the way up before her nerve gave out and she backed down. This bold attempt to climb into the African night suggests that there was more to Meg Gehrts than her companions had credited—and that Africa meant more to her than simply tagging along with Schomburgk and playing at being an actress.

IN early November, Schomburgk moved his team on to Sokodé, the next government station, a hundred and twenty miles to the north. Although the main road continued to Sokodé, amenities of European life, such as they were, ceased at Kamina, and all provisions for the months ahead had to be assembled in advance and carried along. If Schomburgk and Hodgson prided themselves on their highly organized preparations, they might have been somewhat deflated by Meg's view of the proceedings: "The packing process interested me greatly; partly, I suppose, because it gave my housewifely instincts full play. It was like making preparations for a glorified picnic." The supplies and equipment, divided into headloads of sixty pounds apiece, required a retinue of a hundred African bearers, whose wages were fixed at a cupful of salt a day. The total number of people in the Schomburgk entourage, including cooks, interpreters, gunbearers, carriers, washmen, personal "boys" and maids—the maids actually purchased, for the price of four English pounds apiece, and handed over to a Catholic mission on the expedition's return—was a hundred and twenty.

The journey from Kamina to Sokodé was broken into convenient stages by thatched rest houses strung at roughly twenty-mile intervals along the road. Rising well before dawn, Schomburgk and his party were generally under way by three in the morning, so as to be settled into their next camp before the hottest part of the day. A covered hammock, carried by relays of bearers, was available to Meg, but at this early stage she gamely undertook to accompany her colleagues by bicycle. In subsequent stages, she resorted to the hammock more and more frequently; in her book, she at first makes apologies for her "laziness" but finally challenges the reader to "spend an hour or so in the Palm House at Kew Gardens" to get a taste of the enervating heat.

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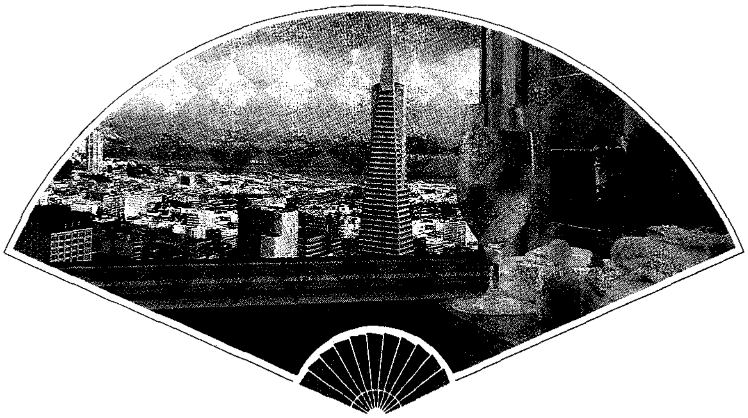

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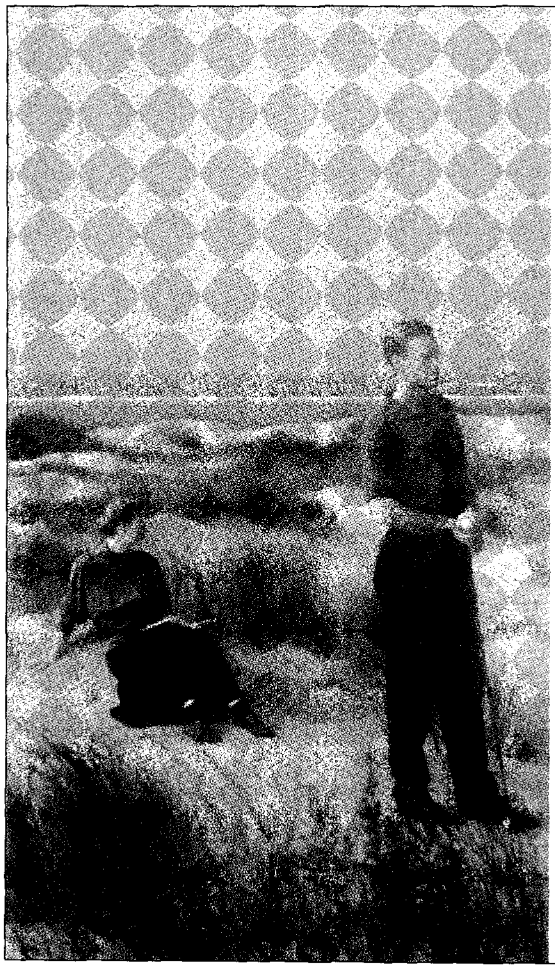

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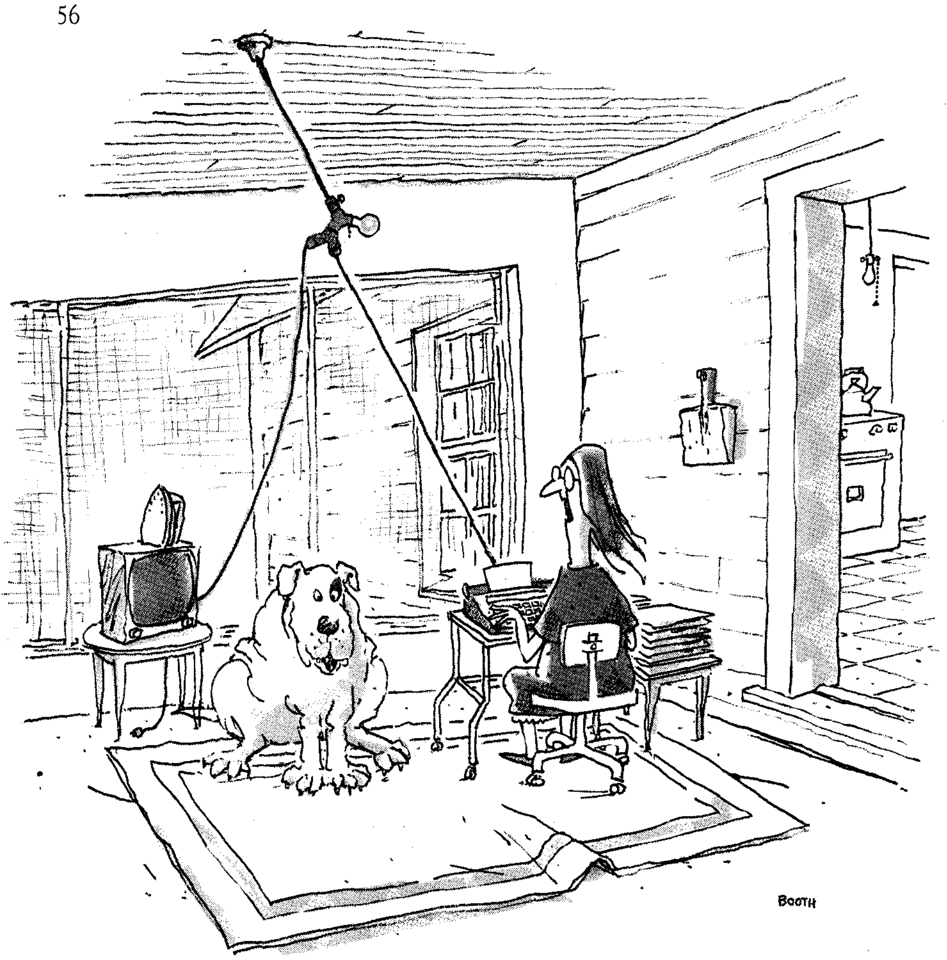


"Remorse sits in my stomach like a piece of stale bread. How does that *sound?"*

• •

ulous town in Togo, with busy gas stations, a sprawling market, and restaurant-bars that open out onto the street through beaded curtains. Some four miles to the east—striking off, as Meg says, at right angles into the bush—one comes to the Kotokoli village of Paratau, a neat cluster of round, chubby thatched huts topped with pottery knobs.

The expedition stayed at Paratau as guests under the protection of Uru (King) Dchabo, the paramount chief of the Tchaudjo people. The Tchaudjo had historically been great horsemen, and Schomburgk's primary motive for staying in the district was to film their equestrian skills, both for documentaries and for dramatic works. For the latter, he now had an additional actor at his disposal—the artist, Kay Nebel.

According to letters that Nebel wrote to a family friend in Germany, he had spent a pleasant five months in Schomburgk's absence. The main pastime at the Sokodé station, thanks to the availability of the Tchaudjo horses, was riding, which suited Nebel, who wrote that next to painting he loved "riding through beautiful Nature." He acquired five stallions of his own from the chief at Paratau, the finest of which he described as "a magnificent, fiery, brown-black animal," aptly named Nucussu, which was said to translate as "the strongest, swiftest, and bravest steed." He had his own steward, his own interpreter, and five stableboys to look after his horses, and was soon taking part in Sokodé's agreeable hunting-and-riding routine.

In early June, Nebel had received an invitation to accompany Oberleutnant von Roedern, of the Sokodé station, on a five-week census-taking safari, which would carry them into districts otherwise closed to Europeans. Elated, he accepted the invitation and consigned the cinematographic equipment to the care of the military personnel. The departure from Sokodé was a momentous occasion for Nebel. A wondrously beautiful day had dawned, and when the soldiers, "all black, even the sergeant-major," had been mustered for the roll call, a guard of twenty men was selected to escort the safari team, while the bearers stood in readiness by their loads. At "the noble trumpeter's" signal, the procession got under way, the dignity of the ceremony being only slightly marred by the circumstance that Herr von Roedern was not sufficiently recovered from dysentery to ride, and had to make the early stages of the journey in a light two-wheeled wagon pulled by bearers.

As "the fairy-tale procession" advanced, villagers dressed in their festive best came out to cheer and greet the company all along its route, and the chief of Paratau sent his finest riders to meet it: "Behind us, nothing could be seen but these fantastic horsemen, shining under the tropical sun, a shimmer of colors and a buzz of sound, caused by the countless harness ornaments. . . . Never yet was I so happy as on this day."

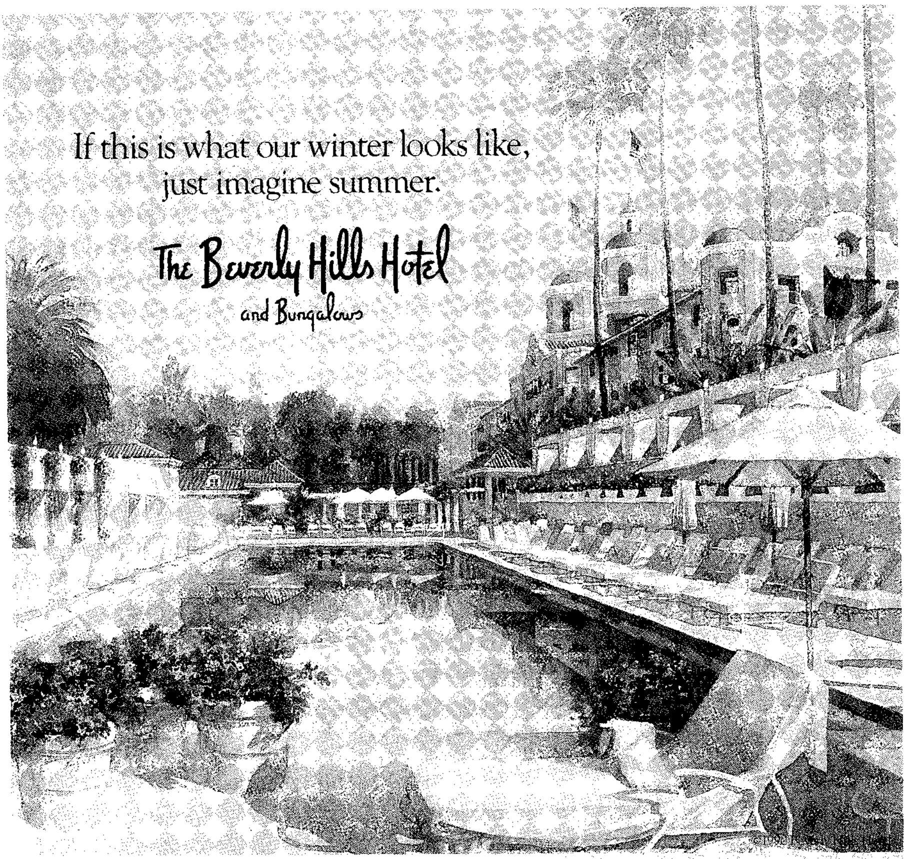
Nebel's most abiding memories of the entire filmmaking safari stemmed from those five months in which he was on his own—a heady period that came to an end when Schomburgk returned to Sokodé. From being the technical leader of the remnant of the original expedition, a man in command, Nebel found himself reduced at the moment of their reunion to Schomburgk's mere subordinate.

Nowhere in Nebel's correspondence does he suggest that he had any inkling of Schomburgk's new plan to make dramatic movies. If this is the case, Schomburgk's return brought Nebel several surprises, among them Meg Gehrts, whom he had evidently known in Hamburg, and the news that he was now to be a moving-picture actor.

Nebel's feelings about his unlikely reacquaintance with Meg Gehrts at a West African military station are not recorded, but the nature of Meg's reaction to Nebel can be gathered from her description of him: "The sleek, well-groomed young fellow I remembered had developed into a typical bushman. His face, neck, and arms were burnt and blackened by the sun to a very deep mahogany color. He wore a huge cowboy hat, beneath which his long hair fell almost to his shoulders, *à la* Buffalo Bill. His flannel shirt was open at the throat. He looked wonderfully picturesque, and also marvelously disreputable, a sort of cross between a typical grand-opera brigand and a Western American desperado."

The timing of their meeting was opportune, for the long sojourn at Paratau was to be far more trying than that at Kamina. Few Europeans had reason to come as far as Sokodé, and, Meg writes, "I am frequently reminded here as elsewhere that I am the first white woman to intrude her presence among these primitive people. The women shrink from me, or look askance, and the children run screaming in terror away from me." The annual harmattan season had set in: the parching wind filled the air with "an impalpable yellow dust, like fog, so thick that one could look straight into the sun at mid-day without hurting one's eyes." And during the weeks in the village she occupied an old hut whose wattle-and-daub walls gave off a "sickly, mouldy odour."

It was Schomburgk's plan to shoot a number of two-reelers at Paratau, and here, through the good offices of Uru Dchabo, the recruitment of local extras went relatively smoothly. None of the plots of these short films have survived, and only one of the titles is known—"The Heroes of Paratau"—but it seems that a chase scene was central to each, in order to use to full effect the Tchaudjo horsemen's skills. One story, it seems, concerned a "fugitive from justice," who was at some point pursued by Meg and her bodyguard of African horsemen. The star of this drama was not, as one might have expected, Major Schomburgk but the marvellously disreputable-looking Kay Nebel. The company, including the two stars and about thirty horsemen, rehearsed from seven to eleven in the morning, or until the heat became unbearable, and, even with this precaution, Meg suffered from incessant headaches. A photograph shows her dressed for her role in a cowboy hat, heavy riding breeches and boots, and a thick shirt, with a swashbuckling leather gun belt around her waist—a costume that, while photogenic, could hardly have been comfortable in the harmattan's blanketing heat. "After spending about ten days in Paratau, I began to feel my health breaking down," she writes, but adds that she did not wish to complain, as they were "in the middle of a new drama, and I knew that Schomburgk had his heart set on



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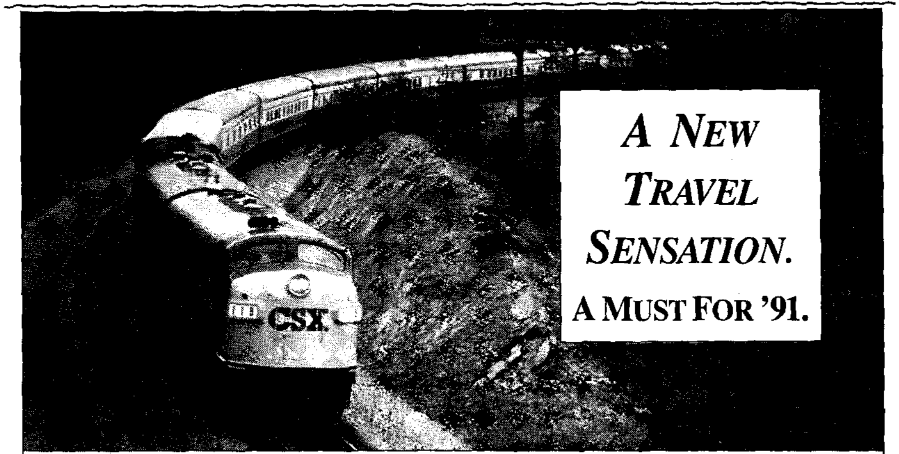

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Despite Meg's resolve—or perhaps because of her zealousness—an accident prevented this particular film from being finished. A scene called for Nebel, as the fugitive, to gallop away across the mountains while turning in his saddle to fire at Meg and the thirty Tchaudjo horsemen in hot pursuit. The shots and the horsemen's "bloodcurdling yells" caused Meg's horse to bolt for the brink of a "fairly high cliff." Meg, throwing away her revolver, wrestled with the reins to gain control, and Nebel lunged at the bridle as her horse sped past. Swerving to avoid him, the horse leaped off the cliff onto a rocky ledge, fortunately landing on soft ground. "A yard to the left, a yard to the right, were masses of jagged rocks," Meg writes, "and had he come down on these I should almost inevitably have been killed."

"I must go away, and at once," Meg told Schomburgk that night. Her own diagnosis was that she had been badly bruised and shaken by the fall, "and this, coupled with the shock to my nerves, so aggravated my previous indisposition that I collapsed." Though Schomburgk has omitted from his accounts any reference to what was clearly his leading lady's emotional breakdown, he nonetheless seems to have realized that he had pushed her too far. Word was sent to Sokodé that an emergency consignment of porters was needed, and as soon as the men arrived the expedition broke camp at Paratau and set out for the nearby highlands of Aledjo-Kadara, where there was a sanatorium of sorts overlooking a plateau meadow in an alpine landscape.

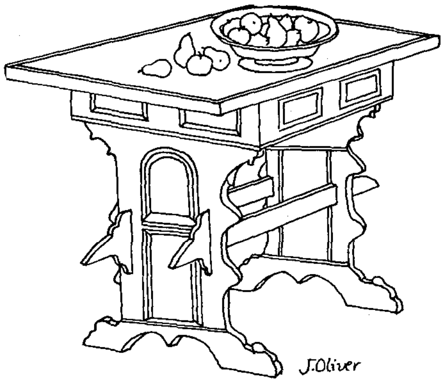
Here Schomburgk filmed what was, according to Meg, one of his most successful dramas, "The Outlaw of the Sudu Mountains." The plot is summarized by Meg:

> A white man is outlawed from amongst his fellows, and takes to the bush, living as a native amongst the natives. Prowling about one day in the vicinity of a settlement, he approaches a farmer's homestead, and is ordered off by the farmer's wife—myself. Cursing and threatening, he goes away to his lair in the hills, where he has collected together a lot of black scalliwags, of whom he is the self-elected chief. He sits apart on a knoll, brooding over the slight that has been put upon him, and vowing revenge.
>
> His chance comes sooner than he had anticipated. From his eerie in the hills he sees me walking along a lonely path, decides to kidnap me, and does so, carrying me, struggling wildly, to his lair, over steep and dangerous mountain tracks.

Hodgson set up his camera among the boulders edging the plateau—the chosen location for the outlaw's "eerie in the hills"—and shooting began. Nebel, who had again been assigned the villain's role, waylaid the heroine and started off with her down a dangerous mountain track—where "part of the way led along the brink of a precipice, where the foothold was extra precarious." Schomburgk had originally instructed him to carry off Meg in his arms, but Nebel had insisted that the only way an outlaw would abduct a woman was by tossing her over his shoulder. While Hodgson ground away at his hand-turned camera and Schomburgk observed the action with enthusiastic approval from a nearby rock, Nebel, rushing down the path, stumbled just at the moment that Meg gave a particularly "energetic wriggle" and lost his balance completely, causing her to sail over his shoulder and land near the edge of the precipice. Hodgson kept filming, and Meg relates with some pride that the mishap made an especially good picture.

Meg was obviously the person who should have been most shaken by the episode, but she seems to have taken it in stride. The reaction of the leading man, however, was unexpected and mysterious. "Whether it was the effect of this little upset or not, I am unable to say," Meg writes, "but the fact remains that soon afterwards Nebel got homesick, and gave out that he must return to Europe then and there." Nebel's premature resignation was accepted by Schomburgk, with the proviso that he act in a few more scenes of a third major drama before his departure.

It may be that Aledjo's comfortably familiar Tyrolean landscape turned Nebel's thoughts toward home; he had, after all, been away far longer than any of his companions. But it may also be that his fall, like Meg's, triggered some kind of nervous breakdown, particularly since this narrow escape was not the first he had survived in the service of dramatic art: in one scene of an unidentified drama he had played the role of a villain who was shot on the edge of a low cliff. Schomburgk had directed him to fall backward over the cliff, and had instructed a group of Africans below to hold a blanket in lieu of a safety net. Unfortunately, the members of the support team had been so interested in watching the drama that they forgot to hold the blanket, and Nebel was badly bruised. Furthermore, this performance had to be repeated several times before it was got right.



Meg asserts that "all the dramas we played in Togo were entirely the work of Major Schomburgk" and that "The Outlaw of the Sudu Mountains" evolved "practically on the spot." And while its primary inspiration was said to be the landscape, there is evidence that this spontaneous script was also shaped, at least in some small degree, by what one could delicately refer to as "group dynamics."

The fact that Nebel is consistently cast as the villain, for example, is in itself interesting. Since it was he who played the rapacious brigand in "The Outlaw of the Sudu Mountains," it must have been Schomburgk who played the husband of the abducted heroine. The script of "The Outlaw" at one point called for the chastised outlaw to retreat, cursing and threatening, and then sit brooding over his slight; Nebel's moodiness and temper were notorious. It is unfortunate that one cannot know how this story ended.

The emotional plot thickens with what was to be the final purely dramatic work, "Odd Man Out." This film was shot at the Bafilo government station, situated some ten miles north of Aledjo, in the lush and sodden hills above Bafilo village. A complete synopsis of the drama is given in the June 15, 1914, issue of *Cinema Notes:*

> An Englishman living in the wilds writes to his wife, describing his loneliness; she leaves England to join him.
>
> On board the ship Ima makes the acquaintance of Paul Kenning, and he becomes greatly infatuated with her and the infatuation is returned. Met by her husband John at the end of her journey, she is

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> chilled at her reception. John is a man of violent temper, and this, coupled to the primitive bungalow and surroundings, depresses her.
>
> Later on Paul appears on the scene. Ima is now so weary of her life that it needs little persuasion on the part of Paul for her consent to leave her husband. Meanwhile, John, in a fit of temper has thwacked one of the natives, so they rise and attack him. Ima meets her husband and horrified at his danger, informs Paul, who gains the help of a friendly tribe. John is rescued. Husband and wife embrace and go off happily. Paul is left to "think things out."

The general outline of this story had obviously been devised well in advance, but it would have remained possible to improvise details until a late date, and here, too, the inner drama suggests the possibility of an outer one. In the light of the casting of "The Outlaw of the Sudu Mountains," one might assume that here, too, Schomburgk took the role of the lawful husband with whom the errant wife is ultimately reconciled, but that would be to overlook the fact that Schomburgk's pride lay less in his masculine charms, which he perhaps took for granted, than in his knowledge of African bush lore and of Africans. The real hero of "Odd Man Out" is the white man who has won the respect of the "natives" (a "friendly tribe," as opposed to a band of "black scalliwags") to the point where they allow him to lead them to the rescue of the foolish and ill-tempered husband.

The degree to which the personal interactions and emotional undercurrents of the group helped to shape the script must remain a matter of speculation, but the casting is a matter of fact. The role of the fickle wife, whose head was so easily turned by a newcomer, and who was so quickly depressed by her primitive surroundings, was, of course, assigned to Meg Gehrts. The oafish husband—violent, lacking control of his emotions, and, although ostensibly in a position of authority, actually incapable of exerting any real power over the tribesmen he bullied—was played by Kay Nebel. And the hero and rescuer of both the foolish white man and the foolish woman—the man capable, if he so chose, of charming young wives away from their husbands, the odd man out—was played by Hans Schomburgk.

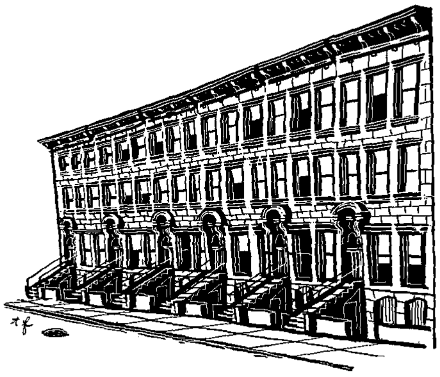
IN Bafilo, Schomburgk and Hodgson made the first of a series of "industrial films," documenting the local cotton industry. The process was followed through its many stages—from the handpicking in the fields, through the ginning and weaving, to the dyeing of the finished cloth. The only other ethnological film to date had been that of the Tchaudjo horsemen at Paratau. With the completion of the dramatic movies, Schomburgk was able to devote himself entirely to his documentary films, the next of which was to be shot at Sansanné-Mango, the northernmost German station.

Schomburgk, Gehrts, and Hodgson began the eight-day march, on horseback, from Bafilo to Sansanné-Mango in the early morning of December 16th. The way was extremely rough—a mere "native track," which dipped and rose among forested ridges. Though they took the precaution of dismounting and leading their horses down the most treacherous valley slopes, they had several dangerous mishaps, and even when they were riding on flat ground the track's loose, stony surface and boulders prevented them from averaging more than three miles an hour.

On the second day, they rode from four in the morning until half past one in the afternoon without taking a break. The days, Meg writes, were "fearfully hot," while the nights and early mornings were at times so cold that there was frost upon the ground. Her account goes on:

> For at least nine out of the twelve hours of sunshine that one gets in these latitudes, the sun pours down scorching rays from a cloudless sky upon sandy plain and mountain rock, and the whole landscape shimmers and glows like the mouth of the furnace; but with the coming of night a sudden chill seems to fall from the stars, the heat radiates rapidly into space, and the mercury in the thermometer drops often as many as forty or fifty degrees in hardly more than as many minutes.

They were camping out now as often as they were staying in rest houses or village huts. A photograph in "A Camera Actress" shows Meg doing needlework at a folding table in her tent; a woven mat has been spread upon the bare ground, and toward the back of the tent is a camp bed with mosquito netting above. A mirror has been nailed to the central tent post. "The fact of the matter is that a tent in the tropics is not at all a desirable kind of dwelling-place," Meg writes. "It looks cool, and it sounds cool, but it isn't anything of the kind. On the contrary, its interior is almost always stiflingly hot."

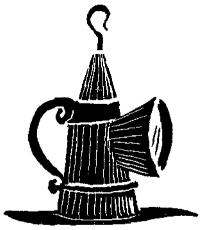


On the fourth day, just outside a village called Guérin Kouka, the members of the expedition encountered a great crowd of the notorious Konkomba warriors, who advanced toward them in leaps and darting mock attacks, yelling and brandishing their bows and poisoned arrows in the air. Schomburgk, unperturbed as always, assured Meg that this was the Konkomba way of welcoming an honored guest: herself, in this case—the first white woman they had ever seen.

After leaving Aledjo-Kadara, and even during this most arduous part of her safari, Meg strikes one as being in noticeably higher spirits than she had been in the relative comfort of Kamina. One reason, surely, was that after three months of being on safari she had grown increasingly tough, and she had begun to take an interest in the running of the camp; it was Meg who was now supervising the "chop," or kitchen, for example. But it might also be that Meg was buoyed by the reappearance of an appreciative audience—something she had lacked since leaving the Henny Woermann. At Sokodé and beyond, the novelty of the presence of a white woman had been met by the local villagers with cautious curiosity or fear. The fearless Konkomba, however, hailed her with reverence. After she was conducted into Guérin Kouka, Meg's "savage escort" began to sing a "low, melodious yet barbaric chant," which, according to the interpreter, had been composed in her honor, and proclaimed her to be "more fair than the moon, brighter than the sun, and more graceful and beautiful than a roan antelope"—a tribute received with evident satisfaction and gratitude by the White Goddess.

On quitting Guérin Kouka, the travellers continued north by way of side trails, and arrived after two more days at the banks of the Kara River, which they forded on horseback through water that reached up to the horses' saddle flaps. They had begun to come upon the spoor of elephant, hippopotamus, and buffalo, which was duly pointed out by the White Hunter, to the excitement of the others. Two days farther on, they reached the Oti, the principal river of Togoland. "Here," writes Meg, "we halted, had breakfast, and tidied ourselves as best we could for our entry into Sansane-Mangu which lay only about another hour and a half's ride in front of us."

On the outskirts of the present town, on a grassy headland overlooking the Oti River, stands what is left of Sansanné-Mango, the colony's most remote military station. The imposing graves of three German officers lie under a baobab tree of prodigious size, odd fragments of their blurred inscriptions still legible under rainwater pools and lichen: "FRANZ WERNER . . . TATIONSASSISTENT B. 23 x 1875, T. 9 III 1900." The grass, lush and green, sweeps to the very edge of the promontory, where the scant remains of a crumbled sand-colored building command the view. Below, the Oti manages to convey the impression of being a far grander river than it really is, thanks to an unobstructed panorama across a spartan, virtually treeless plain, which allows one to follow the river's every bend for miles in either direction.



From this vantage point it is not difficult to envisage the Schomburgk expedition's triumphant gallop across the Oti plain to the windy station; but the sight that met their eyes is not to be guessed at. Here, Hodgson writes, "the district commissioner had built himself a grand fortress palace of granite," and he goes on, "This fortress, which resembled one of those great castles on the banks of the Rhine in Germany was surrounded by a moat and entered over a drawbridge. Over the Portcullis was a machine gun emplacement. The surrounding country had been cleared of all possible obstacles for about half a mile in every direction. Captain Hirschfeld certainly did not intend to be surprised."

Through her field glasses Meg was able to see that flags were flying from the fortress, and she guessed, even before Schomburgk told her so, that "the decorations are in honor of the advent of myself, the first white woman in Mangu." Exhilarated by the prospect of a royal welcome, and "intent on making as imposing an entry as possible," Meg rode forward to meet the gallant Captain, who was advancing toward the party at a canter, accompanied by his mounted bodyguard. Alas, the effect of her entrance was spoiled when her horse lost its footing, and pitched Meg over its head, face first, into deep sand.

The expedition made this entrance on December 23rd, and thus celebrated Christmas at the Captain's handsome stone establishment, dining on roast pig and on tinned delicacies that had been preserved all year for the occasion. There was much in the region that Schomburgk hoped to film, including the construction of a new fort, for which the local inhabitants had been pressed into labor. He and the others made a prolonged visit, availing themselves of von Hirschfeld's hospitality off and on until the first of February.

The setup at Mango, presided over by only six Europeans in 1913, serves as a reminder that, however extreme some of the measures taken by Schomburgk for the purpose of his dramas may seem (crowd scenes recruited from twenty scattered villages, a hut cut in half, and so forth), they were tame compared with the ongoing dramas staged by the resident German officers—surely a subject as worthy of an ethnological film study as the laboring Africans.

The combination of the notoriously low character of many of the German colonial administrators and their absolute authority eventually proved fatal to the colony. In addition to perpetrating acts of wanton brutality, some officials acted out their bizarre personal fantasies, often characterized by recurrent motifs—the archetypal manifestations of megalomania. Grandiose buildings like Captain von Hirschfeld's castle were not uncommon. Arthur Knoll, in his book "Togo Under Imperial Germany," draws attention to the fact that "district officers with long tenure built their districts according to conditions that they knew at home; Misahöhe took the shape of Gruner's Thuringian mountain village; Atakpamé under von Doering looked like an East Prussian nobleman's estate; Sokodé, where Kersting was, resembled a Baltic manor." Baltenschloss, the station at Bassar, was, according to Meg, "built

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very much on the lines of an old Norman castle, with a castellated tower."

A chorus line of incessantly drilled "native" troops, performing steps and maneuvers choreographed by their superior officers, served, perhaps, as the most important extras. Captain von Hirschfeld had just such a company, which, Hodgson says, "he had drilled into a remarkable state of discipline" (ten hours a day, according to Meg). "They marched and goosestepped just like toy soldiers on a controlling string."

This juxtaposition of Teutonic fantasy with the brute reality represented by the laboring villagers was in every respect a perfect setting for Schomburgk's next major feature—a semi-dramatic work based on an attack in 1897 on the old Mango military station by the Chakossi tribe. It was Schomburgk's aim to reënact this historical event as faithfully as possible, and to this end Africans who had actually taken part in the campaign were enlisted as extras. As might have been expected, von Hirschfeld was as coöperative as could be desired, and made virtually the entire garrison available to Schomburgk for the filming, but "curiously enough," according to Meg, "we had considerable difficulty in getting the natives to act as supers in this film."

Schomburgk led his party away from Mango in early January, when the villagers in the immediate vicinity were beginning to burn the savanna grass, something that they did annually to regenerate the soil but that exacerbated the heat of the river valley and made the air heavy with black dust and ashes. Beyond Mango, there was no official road, and not even a track, so the expedition kept as much as possible to the Oti's course. After four days, it pitched its northernmost camp, outside the village of Sumbu, on a bluff overlooking the river. The people in this region were, according to Meg, "very wild in appearance," dressed only in loincloths of bark and skirts of green branches. They were also "sullen and suspicious," and were held in fearful regard by the other Africans on the expedition.

"We have now traversed Togoland from end to end," Meg writes, "and I can flatter myself that I am at all events the first white woman to go farther than Sokodé, and only one or two, at most, have ever been so far as that."

APART from the irresistible appeal of a jaunt through Togoland's least explored region, Schomburgk's main interest in these northern plains lay in the opportunities they offered for filming animals in the wild. Oddly, animals figure very little in his films, and it says much in his favor that he forwent the obvious temptation to stage big-game dramas, casting himself as the White Hunter. Animal films are by and large more difficult to make than ethnological films, and, as things turned out, Schomburgk was unable to get the wildlife footage he had hoped for on this trip, the animals proving less malleable than his human subjects, but it is clear that from the start Africa's people, more than its landscape and wildlife, were what had captured his imagination. Even with regard to his dramatic films Schomburgk claimed that the aim "was to visualise, as it were, for the European public, scenes from African native life as it once was all over the continent, and as it is even now in the more remote and seldom-visited parts; and it was further my object to so present the various incidents as to ensure their being pleasing and interesting to all classes and conditions of people."

Any assessment of Schomburgk's work should be made within the context of what his contemporaries were doing and, because two films made in Africa only a few years before the Togoland expedition have in part survived (both in the Library of Congress film archives), such a tentative assessment is possible.

Footage shot in 1909 of former President Theodore Roosevelt's African safari has as much in common with a political-campaign ad spot as with a documentary account of Africa. Many of the scenes were shot in Nairobi and Mombasa, or along the railway lines in between. "Native" dancing is shown, but it is performed by crowds of men and women who have gathered (or been gathered) near the train station or some other convenient observation post. Roosevelt is shown on horseback, at the head of a line of African porters, and fording a river; Roosevelt peers over a gun; Roosevelt plants a sapling outside a trading house; a crude carnival appears under the caption "NATIVE AMUSEMENTS IN MOMBASA"; and there are many tent scenes. In short, little about "traditional" Africa and its people is conveyed, and even in its day the film was considered dull.

An acclaimed film called "African Hunt," which was shot by an American filmmaker, Paul Rainey, in 1912, opens by showing African bearers picking up their headloads and beginning a single-file march through long bush grass; the expedition crosses a river; camp is set up, and the white leaders can be seen at their ease in their tents; "natives" are shown sporting naked in a river and playing tug-of-war while a white referee looks on. Though the film was famous for its animal shots, many of the closeups are of animals confined in a pen, where they are provoked and teased into reacting for the benefit of the cameras. A pack of dogs barking and baying in the bush introduces most of the hunting scenes; a rhino is chased and is then shown dying. The most abiding image is a searing one: a trapped hyena is seen with heaving sides and lolling tongue as it desperately tries to drag itself free of an iron trap clamping the bloody stump of one leg, while white and African men look on. In sum, the celebrated Rainey film is not about Africa; it is about a white man's safari.

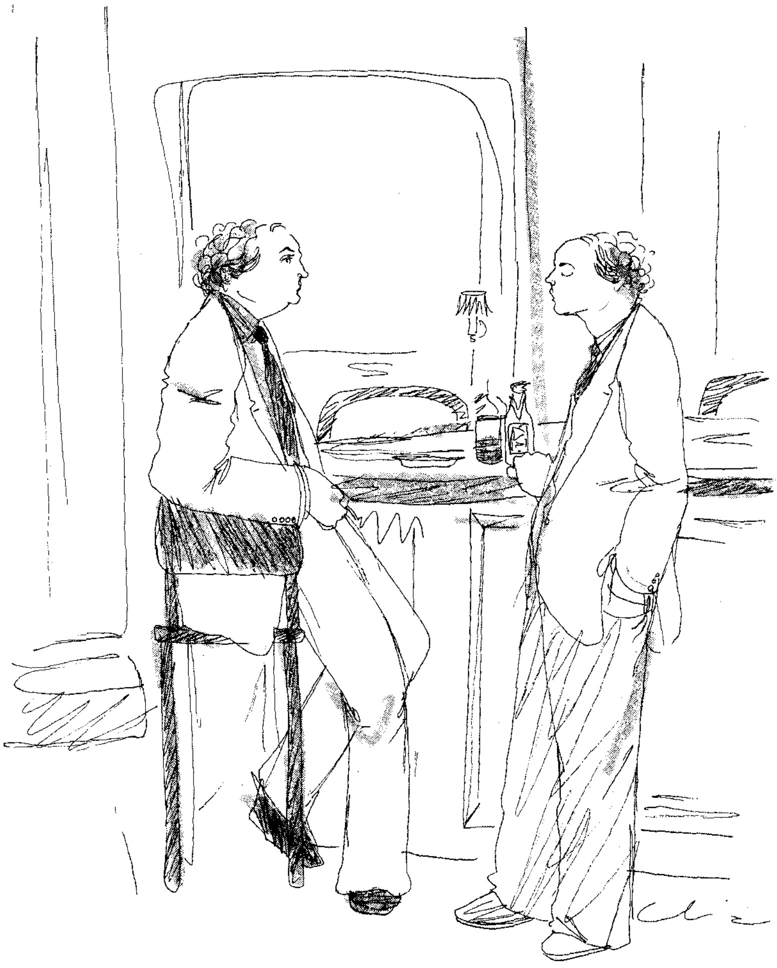
In contrast to both these films, Schomburgk's very choice of subjects—the numerous industrial films, for example, which depicted activities ranging from making jewelry out of palm nuts to forging iron—points to a keen interest in the fundamental and mundane tasks of African traditional life. There was also a purposefulness in Schomburgk's itinerary and film agenda; this was not a man who had come to Africa with a vague idea of hitting on something exotic or interesting to film. Schomburgk's subjects were, after all, culled from the experience of seventeen years of knocking around in East, West, and Southern Africa—years that at the time of the Togoland trip represented more than half his life.

In his written works, whatever the subject—his own life, Africa, film—Schomburgk is maddeningly oblique, content to present his readers with the bland outline of an event, and rarely bearing down on crucial details. In the narratives of Nebel and Hodgson, and even in Meg's, he has a strangely elusive, shadowy presence. He is the prime mover of everything pertaining to the expedition; his observations, knowledge, and advice form the prism through which the experiences of the others are refracted; he is the tacitly acknowledged star of each one's story. Nevertheless, his is the character that is most difficult for a reader to grasp. A man of few words, Schomburgk did not offer much in the way of revealing conversational nuggets to be preserved by the people who were describing him. Yet his very silence may be revealing. "I felt I was really near to Nature at last," Meg wrote in her account of the northern excursion along the Oti. "I did not want to talk—only to listen and look. I am beginning to understand now how it is that all the white bush people are quiet men, who think a lot, but say little."

If I were forced to choose—from among Schomburgk's companions' narratives, his own books, his later interviews, and the recollections of those who knew him—the one incident that comes closest to capturing what I take to be the essence of Schomburgk's character, I would pick an event, described by Meg, that took place at Sansanné-Mango. On the expedition's return to Mango from the north, Schomburgk reported to the officers at the station that he and his party had spotted a great number of marabou storks:

> [The officers] absolutely declined to believe him, holding that he must have mistaken some other commoner species of the crane family for the rare and valuable marabou stork. Our old friend, Captain von Hirschfeld, was especially emphatic on the subject, saying that he had resided in the country for years, that he had travelled all about it on his official tours of inspection, and that if there were any such birds in Togoland he would have been sure to have come across them. We were standing on the square in front of the Captain's house when this conversation took place, and Schomburgk, happening to glance up, remarked quietly to von Hirschfeld: "Why, there's one flying overhead now," at the same time handing him his glasses. "By gad, you're right," cried the Captain, after he had focussed the bird, "I can see the tail feathers plainly." And from now on therefore the *Leptopilus crumenifer* will figure in the list of birds indigenous to Togo.

DESPITE Schomburgk's disappointment with his animal films, Sumbu proved to be a memorable site. One evening, while Meg, Schomburgk, and Hodgson sat outside their tents enjoying their after-dinner coffee and cigarettes, a runner arrived in camp bearing an oilskin-wrapped message in a cleft stick. The message was a cablegram that had been transmitted from London only thirty-six hours previ-



"If at first you don't succeed, have a beer."

ously, retransmitted from Lomé to Mango, and then carried by a relay of runners the fifty-five miles from Mango to Sumbu, the first runner having left the fort at ten o'clock in the morning, the last arriving in camp at eight o'clock that evening.

Schomburgk, who, in his book "Zelte in Afrika" ("Tents in Africa"), condensed his account of the six-week-long Mango trip to twenty-three lines, and the entire Togoland safari to a few pages, devoted in "Mein Afrika" a profligate twenty-one lines to the arrival of this cablegram:

> There appeared in the light of the campfire a dark form, dripping with sweat. The dispatch-runner. Squeezed into the notch of a stick was the long-awaited message! He gave it to my headman, who himself handed it over to me. I gave it again to my cameraman. No one dared to open the fateful letter, until finally the bravest of us decisively tore it open . . . and then broke into a wild dance of joy. The dispatch contained only the single word: "Good."

The telegram had been sent by the Moving Pictures Sales Agency, the production company handling Schomburgk's films, and was the first word he had received about the developed negatives, which he had been sending back in batches from strategic sites. While "A Camera Actress" gives little indication of any anxiety concerning the results of the filming, the accounts of both the director and the cameraman are emotionally explicit.

"The European who looks at an African film from the comfortable armchair of a movie theatre can hardly form a conception of what nerve-racking stands behind such a film," Schomburgk wrote in "Mein Afrika," fifteen years after the Togoland trip. "Day in, day out, we had waited for news, gazing down the road along which the dispatch-runner must come. No conversation arose anymore, but only the same question: How is the negative? Evening after evening, we went to sleep disappointed, only to awaken the next morning with a single thought: Will news come?"

"We all rejoiced," Hodgson wrote. "Even Meg Gehrts who even then had not entirely dried up. We had a celebration, even opening the last packet of cigarettes and two precious tins of Sardines."

The many difficulties that had been overcome to produce these successful negatives ranged from working with harsh tropical light to mending heat-damaged cameras. In the harmattan-stricken north, additional precautions had to be taken against the enveloping dust that infiltrated the cameras. And while the cameras themselves had from the start not held up to the journey well, beyond Mango the situation became a crisis. "The cameras shrank under the tropical heat," Hodgson wrote, "and I spent hours rubbing oil into the wooden cases." Nevertheless, the cases cracked and pieces fell away, and Hodgson and Schomburgk passed many nights patching up the damage of the day, filling the split wood with sealing wax and wrapping the cases in banana leaves. Despite this assiduous care, however, all but one of the cameras eventually "packed up," as Hodgson put it; they had become so warped by the heat as to be useless.

The development of exposed film at the end of each day's shooting (a formidable task in tropical conditions, even by today's standards) was perhaps the expedition's most delicate and disagreeable task. Schomburgk, in "Pulsschlag der Wildnis" ("Pulsebeat of the Wilderness"), described the process this way:

> Who can imagine what it is like there, outside in the forest or on the steppes, to sit at night in a dark, musty hut or in a hermetically sealed tent—compared with which the hottest room of a steam-bath is cool—to develop plates or film? All light and air are shut out. Yet in spite of this, in some way that is impossible to fathom, hundreds of mosquitoes gain an entrance, in order to hold their blood-orgy on the naked bodies of the photographers. . . . How often have we arisen, long before sunrise, in the earliest dawn, in order to develop our pictures, so often taken at the risk of our lives? During the night, we would hang in the wind a . . . bag filled with water, in order to have filter water that had been somewhat cooled.
>
> Naked and sweating, we worked in the primitive darkroom. . . . Then, in spite of all the trouble and care, the water soon became too warm again.

Despite the on-the-spot development, a certain amount of fading inevitably occurred in the course of the two-month journey to Europe, and to compensate for it Schomburgk and Hodgson routinely overexposed the film by as much as fifty per cent.

For each march, the bearers responsible for the camera equipment were carefully chosen, and then closely monitored by Schomburgk and Hodgson. The materials for the developing were carried in special boxes of Schomburgk's devising: "I had constructed boxes with double walls, bottoms and tops, and filled the space between them with ashes and thus created a simple thermal box, which held off the heat. At night, we left the chest open in the coolness; in the daytime, it was closed for transport; and when we opened it again on the following evening, cool air always came toward us."

A similar arrangement was used to convey the batches of developed film to Lomé. The individual reels, each wrapped in two layers of double-thick black paper and two layers of foil, and —in case the messenger should fall into a river en route—packed in aluminum cannisters bound with insulating tape, were put in one of Schomburgk's makeshift coolers, and the precious casket was then entrusted to a chosen messenger, who was instructed to open the box each evening to let the night air in, and to close it again at daybreak. "In this way," Schomburgk wrote in "Mein Afrika," "I succeeded in bringing, in 1914, six thousand metres of negative material in entirely problem-free condition to Europe."

Schomburgk was not the only person who had reason to feel proud of this outcome. Hodgson's choice of possessive pronoun in his account of the arrival of the cable is indicative of the extent to which he had staked his budding reputation on the project: "Having no previous experience of tropical photography I was naturally anxious about my results, so when I received a cable . . . to tell me that all was well and my results were splendid we all rejoiced."

Hodgson was seen by the others as an asset to the expedition not only for his professional competence but for his sociability (Meg called him an "inveterate chatterbox") and good humor, and yet he habitually held himself somewhat apart from his companions. According to Meg, Hodgson often left ahead of the group on the long marches, evidently preferring to travel alone. His own memoir, moreover, indicates a degree of closeness only with Schomburgk; for all their temperamental differences, the two men held each other in mutual respect and affection, the extent of which was revealed under shattering circumstances some decades later.

THE last film made at Sumbu could also be called "ethnological." Its subject was the expedition itself—the long train of porters, the striking and breaking of camp, and aspects of daily life on safari, such as paying the African staff their wages. The expedition left Sumbu on January 16, 1914, arriving back at Mango three days later. It remained there until the end of the month, then took its final leave of Captain von Hirschfeld, and began the return journey to Lomé.

The first stage, on horseback, followed a good road, which ran to Nambiri through the northwestern region inhabited by the Konkomba—the tribe that the expedition had encountered, to Meg's gratification, at Guérin Kouka. Schomburgk's idea was to use the return journey to film demonstrations of the Konkombas' dancing and renowned military skills, and, following the filming of the dances, he hit on the idea of inviting a number of the warriors to come forward singly and speak into the camera, telling them that their message would be relayed to Europe. The suggestion was met with enthusiasm, but when the interpreter was asked what these proud warriors had chosen to convey to their European conquerors he declined to reply, saying only that it "would not bear repeating."

Meg was obviously fond of this spectacular people. "The curiosity aroused by my advent in the villages along this usually little frequented route was very great; more so, in fact, than anywhere else in Togo," she writes. The admiring, almost worshipful welcome she had received in Guérin Kouka was repeated with increasing ceremony, and expectant crowds sometimes gathered by the roadside as much as three miles outside a village. Her account continues:

> The road used to be lined three and four deep by hundreds on hundreds of Konkombwa men, women, and children, all in gala attire, and I had to tell my boys to throw up the curtains of the hammock, so that I could sit up and smile my acknowledgments right and left, just as royalty does when it appears on a festive occasion in the streets of, say, London or Berlin. It quite made me blush for myself—and I am not ordinarily over-shy.

From Nambiri to Sokodé the expedition took a southeasterly route, with a detour to the villages of Bandjeli and Bassar to make one of Schomburgk's most successful industrial films, showing the local traditional iron mining and smelting. Then, after what Meg called a "fearful climb" through the Malfakassa mountain range, they arrived, after a long ride, in Sokodé, where they were to rest for five days.

An exciting development had taken place in their absence: "a big and powerful automobile," Meg writes, had been put on the road by the Togo Company at Atakpamé, and could be hired for ninepence per mile. The expedition availed itself of this facility, gunning out of Sokodé in the early morning and reaching Atakpamé and Kamina by noon—in as many hours, Schomburgk noted, as it had taken days on the up-country journey—with the heavy baggage following by "man transport." From Kamina the three travellers took the train to Lomé, where the important task of filming the opening scenes of "The White Goddess of the Wangora" awaited them.

The film begins, it may be remembered, with the discovery by an African tribe of a shipwrecked white baby girl washed ashore in a packing case. Not unexpectedly, there were no white babies to be had in Lomé, and a kind of open casting call was proclaimed throughout the city for a light-skinned child. A multitude of mothers with babies responded, but all the babies were "too black," and most were too big. In despair, Schomburgk considered the possibility of filming the scene in England, at a seaside resort, and using Englishmen colored with burnt cork to look like Africans, but his luck turned when a half-caste woman showed up with her light-skinned child.

The nervous mother was given every assurance that her baby would come to no harm (a guarantee one would think difficult to make under the circumstances) and was paid a sovereign for the loan of her child. She was also allowed to keep the baby's costume, which, Meg noted, "cost another ten

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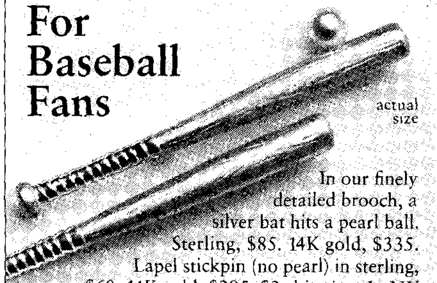

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shillings." The baby was dusted with flour, in order to pass muster for close-ups, and, with the mother and Meg standing on the sidelines ready to rush to the rescue if anything went amiss, was laid in a packing case and floated on the sea. "The rest was simple," Hodgson wrote. "A few wild and woolly natives, in full war paint, especially got up for the occasion, ran into the sea and dragged the packing case ashore. They picked the baby out and executed a war dance around it. They then disappeared into the bush with their capture."

On March 13th, Schomburgk, Hodgson, and Meg embarked on the Eleonore Woermann for the return voyage to Southampton. "Meg Gehrts was again in her right element," Hodgson wrote, "surrounded by a crowd of admiring young men who seemed to regard her as a fabulous heroine who had risked the terrible dangers of the African hinterland, all for the sake of Art with a big 'A.' "

ON May 15th, the Moving Pictures Sales Agency, of Wardour Street, London, announced a private viewing of Hans Schomburgk's new films. Some idea of their novelty can be gathered from the reviews and notices that began appearing in the London papers around that date, and it is also clear which member of the expedition was the main focus of attention:

> The subjects include dramatic pictures, in which the leading parts were taken by the major and Miss Meg Gehrts, a young German actress, with scores of savages for "supers."—*The Evening Express.*

> For the dramatic films which he prepared, Major Schomburgk had the assistance of Miss Meg Gehrts, a young German cinema actress who was the first white woman to journey into the Togo hinterland.—*The Daily Graphic.*

> In view of the fact that a white actress appears in the dramatic film, no doubt there will be many questions asked as to who she is. This accomplished lady is Miss Meg Gehrts, and she has many interesting experiences to relate. When we saw her last week she was wearing in her hat a couple of lovely marabou feathers, and later pointed out to us on the film, where they formed part of the head dress of a coal black giant. . . . The resultant pictures are "great," and are capable of ranking with the output of established film producing plants.—*The Kinematograph & Lantern Weekly.*

Evidence indicates that "The White Goddess of the Wangora" and "Odd Man Out" were the films that were shown publicly, although Meg claimed that "The Outlaw of the Sudu Mountains" was one of the "most successful works." In any event, "The White Goddess" was clearly the masterwork, and was consistently singled out for comment. Its formal release, on July 30th, by Schomburgk Films, through the agency of the M. P. Sales Agency, Ltd., was announced in the important trade journals—*The Bioscope*, *The Kinematograph Monthly*, and *Cinema Supplement*, the last of which described it as a romantic drama nineteen hundred and eighty-eight feet in length.

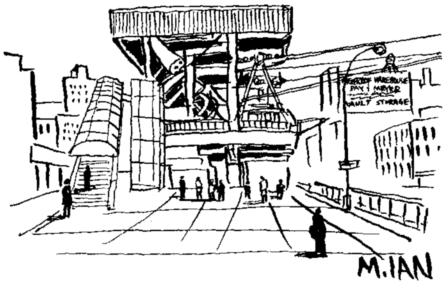
More important to Schomburgk was the success of his ethnological films. "We gave a preliminary show to the President and Members of the Royal Geographical Society," Hodgson wrote, and he added that Sir Harry Johnston, the famous explorer and pioneering colonial administrator in Africa, "gave his opinion that our work was the finest ever done in Africa."

Both the dramatic and the ethnological films had excited popular interest, and a showing was held in the London Philharmonic Hall on the evening of Sunday, June 21st, under the title "Treks and Trails in West Africa." The program, billed as "living pictures of native life and interest," lasted nearly two hours, and was accompanied by a lecture given by "the famous explorer, Major H. Schomburgk, F.R.G.S."

"This lecture was favorable for the success of my films," Schomburgk later wrote in "Zelte in Afrika." "Offer followed offer from all parts of the world. Even from America. The sums being offered, which my agent, an Anglo-German, daily reported anew, made me giddy."

But, only pages later, Schomburgk went on to recall the events of June 28, 1914, one week to the day after the landmark lecture and presentation at the Philharmonic Hall:

> A Sunday evening! I went to bed with no presentiment of what bestirred the world. The following morning, as usual, one of the illustrated daily papers was folded on the breakfast table. A huge picture was on the front page. I took it to be a picture of Kitchener, since I only saw the brow. Nonchalantly, I opened the paper. The picture was of the murdered Archduke! Death at Sarajevo!



Although Schomburgk's first thoughts had been that "this meant war," things appeared to settle down in England after the first excitement, and he went on making plans for a world tour. In July, he left for the Continent with his agent to arrange for showings in Europe—particularly for "a really big show in Berlin." He took with him one positive of one film, its identity unspecified, and possibly some second-cut footage. The other films, together with all the negatives, he left in the care of Hodgson, who was staying in London to finish editing and to write the titles. In France and Germany, Schomburgk witnessed demonstrations and emotional calls for war, and in Germany he found that his British money was no longer accepted. He was still in Germany on the first of August, when the call for mobilization came. He duly enlisted, and subsequently lost all contact with friends and associates in England.

"I never saw Schomburgk again for over thirty years," Hodgson wrote. "Our elaborate programme went to pieces. Without Schomburgk, nothing could be done. I wrote to him and wired but received no reply. Meg Gehrts also disappeared, but I didn't worry about that so much."

"*Alles aus*," Meg wrote in her later memoir. "Done with." Like Schomburgk, she had returned to Europe.

As the property of an enemy national, Schomburgk's films and other artifacts from the expedition were confiscated and stored by the British authorities, and he did not see them again for more than ten years. His name, along with the names of other Germans, was struck from the membership list of the Royal Geographical Society. His next film expedition did not take place until 1922, when he returned to West Africa—and then only to Liberia. Togo, of course, was no longer a German possession.

HANS SCHOMBURGK'S widow, and fourth wife, is a handsome woman in her sixties, with cropped white hair and a tall, athletic frame. She has lived in a Berlin apartment since the

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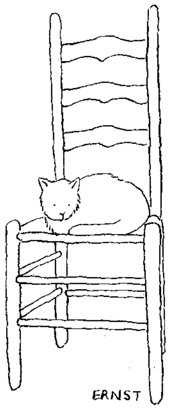
death of her husband, in 1967. She first met Schomburgk four years earlier, at a health spa in Schierke, East Germany, where she was working as a hotel receptionist when the famous explorer, then eighty-three years old, turned up as a guest. (She was in her forties.) The receptionist had been swept off her feet, they had fallen in love, and, after two years of negotiating visas, they had married, and settled in West Berlin. Since his death, she has not married again.

Frau Schomburgk was unaware that her husband had made dramatic films, but she knew where his surviving documentary films were, although she herself had seen only a few of them, years before. Most were in the Archiv für den Wissenschaftlichen Film, in Göttingen, and a few others were scattered among archives in Potsdam, Koblenz, and Wiesbaden. The lists of holdings I was given by the various archives did not turn up any titles familiar from my research, but one of two films in Göttingen, "Deutsche im Sudan" ("Germans in the Sudan"), was dated 1914. (The term "Sudan" here referred not to the Republic of the Sudan but to the vast region of open savanna that extends across Africa between the southern limits of the Sahara and the northern limits of tropical forest.)

Frau Schomburgk made arrangements with the Göttingen archive for us to see her husband's films in Berlin; both films in the Göttingen collection had, mercifully, been transferred from celluloid to video. For this stage of my investigations I had enlisted the help of a young German woman, Benita Edzard, to serve as my interpreter. Benita and I met Frau Schomburgk at the Café Einstein, on a chilly summer morning, and were briskly led by her to a nearby secondary school, where she was now a teacher, and where she had arranged to show the films. Seating us at a table in an empty classroom, she strode around the room from window to window, pulling down the blinds. She had chosen to see the later film first—"Geheimbundriethen der Frauen in Liberia" ("Secret Society Rites of Women in Liberia"), made in 1923.



"So," said Frau Schomburgk, joining us at the table and sitting very straight in her chair. A procession of dancing women came on the screen, clapping their hands soundlessly and opening their mouths in silent laughter. Caught up with Schomburgk as I was, I found it difficult to judge the film objectively. Images that would have been fresh and surprising in 1923 are now familiar; today, one does not have to have set foot in Africa to have a preconception of this kind of village festivity. But one aspect of the film was riveting: the cameraman's or director's eye for the dance sequences, which had caught the underlying, mesmerizing pattern of the group movement. This sense of rhythm and essential group dynamics is, I have discovered, the most compelling Schomburgk trademark.

But "Deutsche im Sudan" was all I had hoped it would be—documentary footage of the Togoland trip. In all probability, this was the one film that Schomburgk had taken with him when he left England. There now came to silent life the cotton ginners at Bafilo; the ironworkers at Bandjeli; and the camp on the Oti River, where a group of African men sat at one side of a tent, in front of which a slim European man stood beside a table.

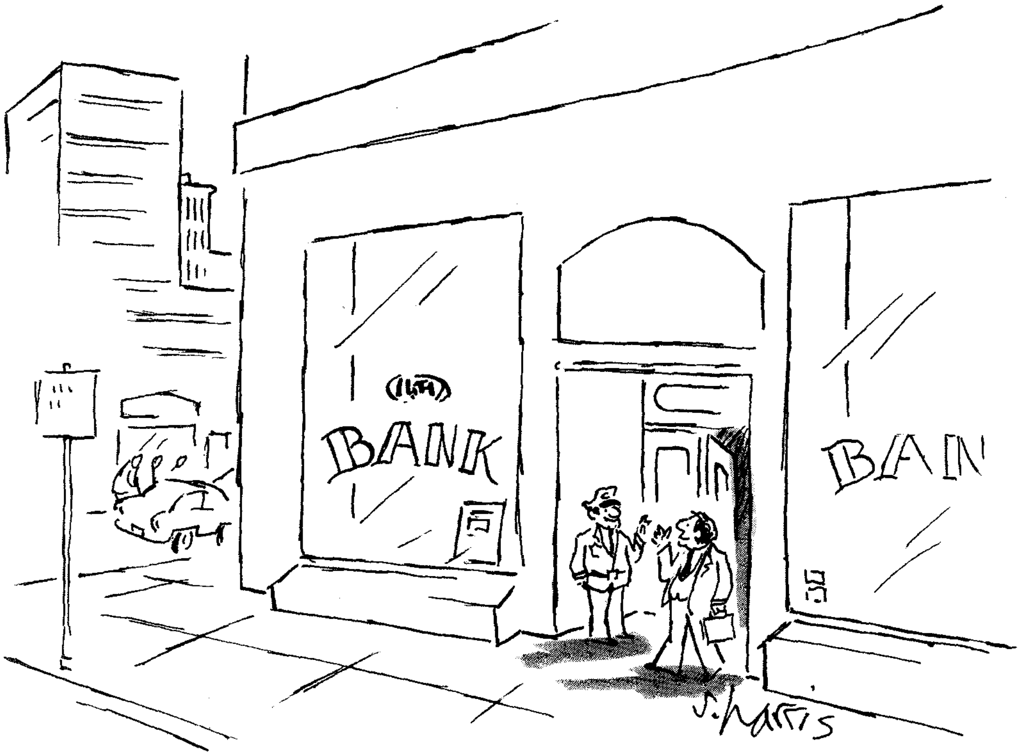
"*Das ist mein Mann*," Frau Schomburgk said, a phrase she repeated at each subsequent appearance of the White Hunter. A long train of African porters, each balancing his sixty-pound load on his head with one hand, snaked across the savanna; the Konkomba warriors appeared, in all their "barbaric magnificence," their faces framed by Schomburgk in oval cameos as each man stepped forward to utter, with a range of striking and vivacious expressions, his unrepeatable message to the camera. Here was Hodgson, clowning around while having his hair cut. And here, suddenly, was Meg Gehrts: on horseback; crossing the Kara River on an African man's shoulders; stepping out of her covered hammock and paying out salt wages to the bearers, overseen by the dashing jodhpur-clad Schomburgk.

"*Das ist mein Mann*," Frau Schomburgk said, yet again. "And that must be Meg Gehrts," she added, in a tone of not exceptional warmth. Meg, her long hair hanging below her pith helmet, was a somewhat buxom figure in a long-sleeved blouse, full skirt, and boots. Her face was for the most part hidden by the shadow of her hat; the clearest glimpse I had of her was in an instant when, in the process of doling out salt, she glanced up, almost shyly, to meet Schomburgk's eyes, as if looking for his approval.

Frau Schomburgk was more responsive to four films we had arranged to see in Potsdam, which had nothing to do with the Togoland trip but were important for understanding Schomburgk in the context of his life's work. To three of them ("Das Letzte Paradies," "Die Wildnis Stirbt," and "Frauen, Masken und Dämonen," dated between 1932 and 1948), an introduction had been appended at a later date, delivered by the eighty-year-old Schomburgk—the man Frau Schomburgk had loved and married. This man, the smooth m.c. of his own earlier performance, was a slight, bald figure with black-rimmed glasses that seemed too heavy for his pinched features. His delivery was that of a practiced and effective showman: with the nonchalant formality of a good talk-show host, he spoke with confidence directly to the camera, his arms held loosely at his sides except when he raised one from time to time to make a clear, unhurried gesture. It was his years as a public lecturer, in the course of many promotional tours for his films and books—not his years in the African wilds—that had fashioned this persona.

Over lunch in Potsdam, Frau Schomburgk casually dropped a bombshell: of course, she said, biting into her sandwich, there were other photographs at the Schomburgk Museum. Benita and I exchanged incredulous looks: in eight months of correspondence, no mention had been made of a museum. Careful inquiries elicited the information that the "museum" in question was a room, and perhaps a library, in the municipal museum of Querfurt, a small town to the southwest which was most easily reached from Halle.

The museum exhibits were housed in a dungeon situated behind the fourteenth-century Torture Tower of Querfurt Castle. Glass cases displaying helmets, swords, daggers, and other objects of iron could be made out in



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the shadows. (Because the museum was officially closed, its main lights had not been turned on.) On the walls of an inner room hung black iron manacles, studded collars, and torture implements. And lodged beside them, in an alcove whose floor had been picturesquely scattered with sand, was the Schomburgk collection.

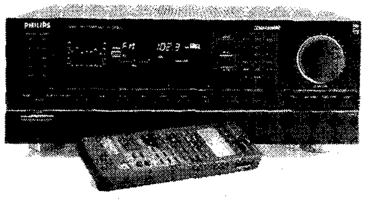
Drums, pipes, and other musical instruments from Liberia, Togo, and South Africa had been laid out artistically on the sand or propped against well-chosen river stones, and on one wall the outline of a Togolese village had been painted in dark red and brown. In a corner of the tiny room a wooden frame had been hung with a fragile skirt of dried grass and garlanded with a necklace of baobab pods. Spears held in place with fishing line leaned out from the left-hand wall. A terra-cotta bust of Schomburgk and two photographs behind it stood as tributes to the White Hunter. In front of the exhibit, a hand-lettered sign explained that the explorer Hans Schomburgk had given this collection to the museum in 1959. It turned out that as a child he had spent his school holidays with an uncle in Querfurt, and had retained an affection for the town.

Benita and I followed the museum's curator into a dark room of cellarlike dankness, where a lone table had been stacked with photograph albums and long wooden boxes; the latter, we soon discovered, contained fifty hand-colored glass-plate negatives, each measuring three and a half inches by four. Many of the subjects of the plates were recognizable from the Togo documentary and Meg's book: here was Meg, again riding on the shoulders of her bearer; here were the expedition bicycles being carried across a river; and here was Kay Nebel, in jodhpurs, checked shirt, and bush hat, crouching on a hillock with a drawn pistol pointed at a calmly approaching riderless horse.

Then, suddenly, we arrived at what was from our point of view the heart of the collection. One of the albums was filled with newspaper cuttings—the London reviews of the Togoland movies. The Querfurt scrapbooks (from which the newspaper reviews quoted earlier were copied) established a hitherto unsubstantiated fact: that the dramatic movies had indeed been successfully developed and publicly screened. Up to that moment, the only references to the completed dramatic films had been the claims of the expedition participants, for no archive in Britain, Europe, Africa, or the United States had any evidence or knowledge that the films ever existed. Now all claims had been justified.

HOME from the expedition, Kay Nebel had enlisted at the outbreak of the war, and had served in the German cavalry. During tours of duty in Poland and Russia, he had made studies in watercolor and charcoal of the landscape and the peasants. In 1915, while he was stationed in the Carpathians, he suffered a bone-shattering leg injury, which caused him to limp until the end of his life. At the war's end, he married his first wife, whom he was to divorce some two years later, and worked as a drawing instructor in Darmstadt. In 1921, at the impressively early age of thirty-three, he was awarded the title of Professor at the Art Academy of Kassel, and married again. He remained in Kassel until his death.

His work, in neatly labelled, rarely opened folders, is stored in the Academy archives. Between placid seascapes of Schwerin and studies of a Russian winter are bold watercolors and sketches of the Togoland trip. The chubby thatched huts; scenes of village life almost lost to sight in the violent-purple shadows of shaggy palms; the gnarled silhouettes of baobab trees and rocky outcrops; muscular Tchaudjo warriors, wearing little but bracelets and animal skins; and, of course, the wonder horses of Sokodé—all have been rendered with a robustness and a verve wholly lacking in the other sketches. Was it the warmth and raw immediacy of Africa that elicited this full-blooded response? Did the striking conviction of color and line derive from a new confidence, bred of Nebel's briefly savored authority? Or is this the work of the "essential" Nebel—Nebel



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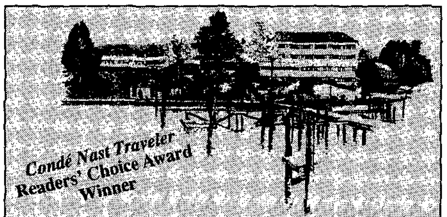

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as he was and might have continued to be if an injury and a taste of war in a Russian winter had not wrought their changes?

In the years between the wars, Nebel allied himself with the movement for Neue Sachlichkeit, or New Objectivity. He worked in a variety of mediums, but came to specialize in fresco, and particularly in large-scale murals commissioned for municipal buildings. In the Hitler years, he followed his own path, and did not succumb to the dictates of Nazi aesthetics. The Kassel Academy was shut down during the Second World War, but Nebel continued to tutor students privately.

Nebel's family recalls that he often spoke fondly of his African experience, and of the striking beauty of the African people. Apart from a few anecdotes, he never had much to say about his brief career as an actor. "He did not take the dramatic films seriously at all," his daughter Ellen told me. "He had gone with the serious intent of being an expedition artist."

Nebel retained the highest regard for Schomburgk, and he once took his family to see the great explorer when he came to Kassel to give a public lecture; on that occasion, Schomburgk used them as "plants," to ask specific questions from the audience. Nebel rarely spoke of Meg, and never mentioned Hodgson. Certainly he had never seen either of them again.

Photographs of Nebel in older age reveal a somewhat stern-featured man with a receding hairline and bushy eyebrows. Despite the oft-cited golden looks of his youth, he had never been a healthy man. His war wounds always troubled him, and a serious thyroid complaint, diagnosed in later years, was thought to have been in part responsible for the notorious rages. He died in 1953, of cancer.

The importance to Nebel of a large oil painting that could with justification be called his surviving masterwork is indicated by the fact that it is the last of three completed treatments of the same subject, which he produced over many years. The first, done in the Expressionist manner, he destroyed in one of his rages over failed perfection; the second was destroyed before the Second World War, when the archives of the Kassel Academy, in which it was stored, were flooded; the third now fills one wall of Ellen's house, in Bethesda, Maryland. The painting shows a procession of magnificently clad Tchaudjo horsemen descending a hill in an African landscape dotted with pottery-knobbed huts. In the left foreground, a knot of African peasants gape at the caparisoned splendor of these black knights on their majestic steeds. New Objectivity artist though Nebel may have been, it is a personal vision that informs this remembered scene—the same vision that must have led him as a young artist to the pageantry of Uccello.

JAMES HODGSON, when it became clear in 1914 that the projected world tour would not materialize, briefly joined the Moving Pictures Sales Agency and continued to make dramas. In February of 1915, he enlisted in the Army, volunteering, as Nebel had done, for the cavalry, citing his riding experience in Africa, but he was transferred to the Royal Flying Corps as a photographer. He saw action in France and the Middle East, and took part in the Mesopotamia campaign, operating field laboratories used for reconnaissance photography. His final military assignment was to film from the air the surrender of the German Grand Fleet, at Scapa Flow, in 1919.

On his return to England, Hodgson married; difficult years followed, as the worthwhile jobs in the film world had been filled by men who had not entered the service, and to squeeze out a living Hodgson resorted to photographing local events. To complicate matters, he had developed tuberculosis, very possibly as a result of the appalling conditions he was exposed to in Mesopotamia. When, in 1923, he accepted an offer by the Southern Whaling & Sealing Company to film whale hunting in the Antarctic, he did so in the belief that he had no more than four years to live; as it turned out, the polar journey cured his tuberculosis. (With a collaborator, Hodgson wrote an account of this adventure, entitled "Whaling North and South," which was published in New York in 1926.)

On returning to England, Hodgson entered the world of photographic journalism, and he remained in it, in one capacity or another, for the rest of his working life. Five bleak years of free-lance work came to an end in 1935, with his employment as chief cameraman for the March of Time newsreel in Europe. In 1939, he was accredited as a war correspondent, and he subsequently travelled widely, from France to South Africa. In the autumn of 1945, he was sent to Germany to report on the aftermath of the war. His final important assignment was in 1948, reporting on events in Poland. His last years at the March of Time were spent at a desk job that bored and depressed him. Hodgson retired in 1951, and occupied himself in writing his lengthy, never-published autobiography—the source of the Togoland material ascribed to him here, and of most of the details of his life that I have cited. In the late fifties, he underwent a disastrous ear operation, which left him with one side of his face collapsed. He died in 1966, just short of his seventy-fifth birthday.

Hodgson often regaled his "tribe"—as he proudly referred to his wife and eleven children—with stories of his many adventurous undertakings. The Togoland stories did not stand out in anyone's memory—after all, they were from an early stage of his life, and perhaps in comparison with whaling adventures in the Antarctic and war experiences in Mesopotamia had not seemed very remarkable. He never mentioned Nebel or Gehrts, but of Schomburgk he spoke with the profound respect of one professional man for another.

The family had often wondered what had become of the Africa films. It now possesses its own video copy of the "lost" Togoland documentary.

THE stories of Hans Schomburgk and Meg Gehrts are more closely intertwined. Contrary to what one is led to expect from Hodgson's and Schomburgk's narratives, and even from her own, Meg got her man: when Schomburgk left London for the Continent just before the outbreak of the First World War, he was accompanied by Meg Gehrts—a turn of events of which Hodgson was apparently unaware. Or perhaps his respect for Schomburgk, coupled with his evident disdain for Meg, could not accommodate this eventuality, and when he came to write his memoir it was conveniently edited out. Soon after the return to Germany, Meg Gehrts became the second Frau Schomburgk. After the war, Schomburgk made his living primarily from lecturing about his experiences in Africa and from writing books, one of which, "Bwakukama," published in 1922, he dedicated to Meg: "My Wife, the courageous African traveller, who was the first white woman to traverse our Togo."

Between 1919 and 1921, Schomburgk made a series of films whose titles suggest that they were both "African" and dramatic: "Eine Weisse Unter Kannibalen" ("A White Woman Among Cannibals"); "Ein Abenteurer" ("An Adventurer"); "Tropengift" ("Tropical Poison"); "Goldfieber" ("Gold Fever"); "Im Kampf um Diamantenfelder" ("Battle for the Diamond Fields"). Meg Gehrts apparently appeared in each (under her maiden name). In one ("Tropengift"), the credits explicitly state that "the African pictures date from the year 1914," and since Schomburgk had made only one photographic safari at that time it can safely be assumed that the African footage for all the films came from the Togoland trip. Apart from the titles, credits, dates, lengths, director (always Schomburgk), and casts, nothing is known about any of these films. It seems reasonable to assume, however, that Schomburgk made them in a studio setting, perhaps basing them upon the dramatic premises of his confiscated dramas and intersplicing them with the authentic African footage he had managed to take with him out of England.

Up until the First World War, Schomburgk had clearly seen himself as an international: he possessed a South African passport, was as comfortable in British company as in German, and was proud of his British service and associations (most notably his medal in the Boer War and his fellowship in the Royal Geographical Society). But the war made an irrevocable determination of his nationality: his treatment as an enemy alien by the British, probably as much as personal nationalistic tendencies, insured that he thenceforth saw himself as German. Consequently, Schomburgk came to resent bitterly the fact that his first film venture had ended up in British hands, and when, in 1922, he embarked upon his second film safari he made sure that every member of the expedition, and most particularly the cameraman, was German.

During this expedition, Schomburgk held a wildly successful African première, in a packed assembly hall in Monrovia, of his one accessible Togoland film, to which he had added footage shot in Liberia. "For the first

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time," he wrote, "the audience saw an African film, saw something that they understood, and which pertained to them." Even so, the expedition ran into financial difficulties, and Meg was sent back to Europe to try to raise more funds. Eventually, the desired ethnological footage was completed, and the resulting documentary, "Mensch und Tier im Urwald," was produced in 1924.

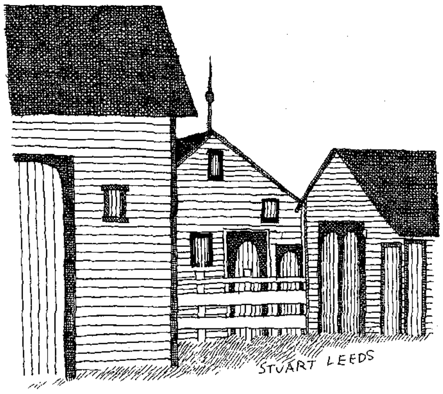
Shortly after Schomburgk returned from Liberia, he and Meg were divorced. The story, according to Meg (as her only surviving relative recalls it), was that Schomburgk picked up his hat one day, left the house saying he was going out to buy cigarettes, and never returned. His ever-roving eye, it seems, had led him into the company of a woman he had met in Frankfurt. Schomburgk's third wife was Kitty Marder, a young singer, who eventually killed herself when Schomburgk ignored her pleas to spend less time away from home lecturing.

In 1926, Schomburgk at last obtained all the Togoland film material that had been in the custody of the British authorities, and he subsequently released two films in Germany: "Fahrten und Fährten" (clearly the "Treks and Trails" shown at the Philharmonic Hall), which had its première at the Union-Theater in Berlin; and "Verlorenes Land" ("Lost Land"), which was most likely stitched together from second-cut material. There is no evidence that the other Togoland films had similar premières. "Mensch und Tier im Urwald" launched him yet again as an African explorer, and by the beginning of the Second World War his African books and movies had made him famous throughout Germany.

At the time of his earliest film safari, Schomburgk's genuine intention—perhaps even his obsession—had been to show the world "all that one sees daily" in Africa, and his satisfaction with his films derived less from their public acceptance than from their having won the approval of Sir Harry Johnston and other initiates who knew the "real" Africa. A decade later, however, Schomburgk began to combine this zeal for realism with a cynical awareness that certain images, such as sunsets and dancing "natives," were popularly perceived to be more interesting—indeed, more quintessentially African—than relatively dull footage of cotton ginning and iron smelting. His films increasingly devolved into pat travelogues—a pastiche of cloud formations, bush, colorful villagers, drums, animals—accompanied by his own narrative, now tending toward the sentimental. (In "Das Letzte Paradies"—"The Last Paradise"—the angelic voice of Schomburgk's third, doomed wife, Kitty, is heard soaring above the closing scenes.) Still, each of these films reveals something of Schomburgk's consummate knowledge of Africa; if nothing else, the sunsets, even in black-and-white, are spectacular and the dance sequences always compelling.

After the failure of a dramatic film attempted on his Liberian expedition, Schomburgk never again undertook a dramatic work. This was so, one suspects, less because of the difficulties inherent in the genre than because he didn't want to undermine the cachet of his serious films and his growing reputation as an intrepid African explorer. Since it appears that "The White Goddess of the Wangora" and the other dramatic films were never shown in Germany—or, indeed, anywhere except in England—it may be that Schomburgk had decided to let these potential embarrassments sink into oblivion. The few references to them in his books are made in such a way as to emphasize the technical difficulties of filming in the tropics; the titles of the films are not given, and the plots are never revealed.

Schomburgk's fortunes took an ill turn with the outbreak of the Second World War. His autobiography, "Zelte in Afrika," had been published in 1931, before the Nazi era, and the story of his life under the Nazis can only be glimpsed in occasional newspaper interviews given after the war. Nonetheless, a record of Schomburgk's experience does exist, and from an unlikely but familiar source—James Hodgson's autobiography. When Hodgson was sent to Germany by the March of Time in the autumn of 1945 to report on postwar conditions there, and was investigating the bombed-out ruins of Berlin, he decided to look up his former friend and mentor. He wrote:



> I found the address in a badly battered street and crossed the rubble into the crazy looking wreck that had once been a house. Inside the passage the place smelt damp and rotten. The wooden staircase hung precariously onto one side of the wall as the steps sloped dangerously down at the other end, there being nothing there to support them. Hugging the wall I climbed carefully up to the second floor. The landing was in complete darkness. I struck a match and noticed, pinned on the door in front, the Liberian flag. It was a very small emblem, being about six inches long and four inches wide. This must be the place. I tapped quietly on the door and after a few moments it opened and in the dim light from the passage I saw Hans Schomburgk. He was indeed the same man, the sturdy well knit figure but now his face was aged and he looked very tired. I was in an American War Correspondent's uniform. "Now Hans" I said. "Have a good look at me. . . . Don't you recognise me now?" His tired eyes studied me for a quiet moment and he queried, "I don't understand Sir." Again I tried to make him recollect, going through our adventures again and again. He just stood there politely listening and at last said, "Won't you come inside, Sir? I am afraid I can't offer you any refreshment except maybe some war time coffee."
>
> I followed him along the dingy passage, into a large room which was crowded with broken furniture, a baby grand Piano in splendid condition, a large brass double bedstead, Kitchen utensils of every sort, grass mats from the Sudan, Red leather cushions, spears, hats, straw shields, strips of native cloth and a large dining table piled up with all sorts of paper and Books. The room was horribly damp and chilly, smelling of mildew. I sat on a broken down settee with Schomburgk and continued with my story, trying to make him recollect. A woman came into the room and Schomburgk introduced her as his wife. The Lady did not understand a word of English and paying very little attention to us, busied herself in trying to light a fire.
>
> At last I stood up to go and turned to Schomburgk to make a final effort. He looked dumbly at me for a while and then I saw that he was beginning to remember. Suddenly he burst into tears and said, "Oh Jimmy, you don't know what they have done to me." We sat down again whilst Hans told me his story. It seems that during the years between the two wars Hans had become, in Germany and Europe, a noted authority on the African continent. He had written and published many books on the subject. Being such a noted character in his own country the Nazis tried to get him into their party but Schomburgk evidently was not at all keen and being such a national figure they did not try to force him. When the war started Hans was strongly opposed to it and openly stated his views. He re-

> minded them that England might get into it and also that England when engaged in war traditionally lost every battle except the last. I remembered Schomburgk's saying similar things many years before.
>
> Anyway, that sort of talk did not please the German Government so with typical Teuton thoroughness they proceeded to investigate Schomburgk's ancestry. Sure enough, they found that one of his great Grandmothers, about two hundred years ago was a Jewess. That was quite enough to put him into an internment camp with all the other unfortunate Jews. All his books and lectures were withdrawn from circulation and destroyed. His personal property was confiscated and sold. A few friends tried to help him by sending him food and clothing but they were soon discouraged by the Nazis. Schomburgk had a wonderful World War One record with the German Armies in Turkey but it made no difference to the treatment he received. Then he was shifted to an internment camp on the Polish border and there he remained until released by the advancing Russians. Through all these weary years he had managed to conceal about his person that tiny Liberian flag (he had been a German Consul in Liberia between the two wars) and when the Russians saw it they thought that he was an American, especially as he spoke such perfect English. (The small flag had narrow lateral lines across, something like the stars and stripes. . . .) So they carried him along with them until they got to Berlin where, knowing nothing of the devastation in that city, he wandered about looking for friends until finally the British Military Command took him in hand and gave him some sort of a job in reorganising the German People.
>
> I managed to make his circumstances a little more comfortable before I left the city.

After the war, Schomburgk was made an honorary president of the Berlin Association of Victims of National Socialism. Perhaps with the wisdom of hindsight, he now claimed that his films and books about Africa were dedicated to achieving an understanding among different peoples, and that he had long been committed to the fight against racial hatred and anti-Semitism. He went on lecturing and writing, and published seven books about Africa between the end of the war and the late fifties. Schomburgk made his last photographic safari in 1956, when he travelled for six months from the Cape to the Congo. The resulting film, "Abschied von Afrika," or "Departure from Africa," was also his last; Schomburgk was by then seventy-six years old.

"I am the last of the old hunters," Schomburgk was quoted as saying in a newspaper interview in 1960. Despite birthday tributes that appeared in print over the years, his celebrity gradually waned, so that when the last of the Great White Hunters died, of heart failure, on a particularly hot July day in 1967, the name Hans Hermann Schomburgk resonated for only a limited number of Germans of a certain age.

MEG GEHRTS SCHOMBURGK's closest surviving relative is not blood kin but, rather, her elder brother John's widow, who lives in one of a row of humble red brick houses on a narrow street on the outskirts of Hamburg. When I visited her there in 1989, Frau Gehrts presented a neat and carefully maintained appearance, with gray curls artfully arranged about a watchful face. She had obligingly gathered various odds and ends that her deceased sister-in-law (called Mooshie by the family) had left, which consisted of little more than photographs, postcards, and some cheap jewelry. Most of the photographs were of the middle-aged Mooshie, a corpulent woman with shrewd, alert eyes and a double chin, either alone or laughing boisterously in the company of equally stout friends. In one of the pictures, Mooshie has adopted a Garboesque pose, and looks out into the camera with an aloof, dreaming gaze—the classic movie queen's reverie. But some of the photographs reveal a young woman, often dressed in a cowboy hat and breeches, against a tropical African landscape. In one of them, she and two European men sit outdoors around a camp table; in another, a handsome man in jodhpurs and an unbuttoned safari shirt sits rakishly on the veranda rail of a wooden house, with the tops of palm trees showing above his head in the background.

When Hans Schomburgk left Meg, she had been thrown upon her own meagre resources. Using contacts in the film world which she had acquired through Schomburgk, she obtained a position as a film cutter for the powerful German film-production company UFA. Later, she worked for several years for the Sender Freies Berlin radio and television station. Further assistance (whether solicited or not is unknown) came from an old crony of Schomburgk's—His Highness the Duke Adolf Friedrich zu Mecklenburg, at whose home in Togoland Meg had presided over tea. Apparently, the gallant Duke had resolved the dilemma of being torn between loyalty to an old friend and his old-fashioned conviction that a lady must be provided for, by

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sending Meg small sums of money on birthdays and other occasions.

Meg had played the grande dame to the end, her sister-in-law said. The way she walked, the way she wore her clothes—always those airs. She had remained in Berlin through the Second World War, and in the autumn of 1946 had moved to Potsdam. In 1949, she had escaped entrapment in the East by the narrowest of margins: a neighbor telephoned her while she was at work, warning her not to return home. Meg at once left for the West with nothing but the clothes she stood in; a small suitcase of possessions was later smuggled to her by a friend. Eventually, she rented a single room in a flat she found in a respectable neighborhood on the Königsallee, in West Berlin, and she lived there from 1954 until her death. No one remembers her there, nor is she remembered at UFA, where, it seems, she had done piecework but had never been regularly employed.

Mooshie had rarely talked about the past—only at five o'clock in the evening, at the *blaue Stunde*, or blue hour, which she celebrated with a tall glass of schnapps, Frau Gehrts said, with a significant nod at the word "tall." Then Mooshie had talked about Africa—or was it the *Afrika Zimmer*, the African room in Schomburgk's house, which had been full of hunting trophies and spears and rugs? Frau Gehrts could not remember. At that hour, too, Mooshie always talked of Schomburgk. "Always Schomburgk," Frau Gehrts repeated, with a kind of shrug.

At some point in her hard times, Meg had written her darker account of the Togoland expedition, which she had tried to publish—to no avail. This sixteen-page narrative, entitled "Mit Schomburgk im Urwald," begins, "Meg Schomburgk, the wife of the African explorer Hans Schomburgk, lived a destiny such as others only dare dream." The article describes her departure with Schomburgk for Togoland, and gives a summary of the Togo trip and also a cursory treatment of the Liberian expedition. Though the tone of this writing is markedly different from that of her published book, the same irony and spirit are at times detectable in both—and are not difficult to correlate with the determined gusto of the older woman of the photographs.

Meg and Schomburgk met only once again in their lives, and that by accident. The episode was recalled by both Frau Gehrts and Frau Schomburgk, who had been with her *Mann* at the time. While she and her husband were waiting to cross the Kurfürstendamm one day, Schomburgk, then well into his eighties, exclaimed, "Good God! There is Meg Gehrts!" And, indeed, there was his former wife, standing on the other side of the crossing. When the lights turned, both parties stepped haughtily into the street and passed each other without exchanging a word.

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A warm, cheap snow, lightly wind-twirled,
rises (so it seems) from grates, puffs
out trees, fills the complicated furrows
of a woman's hat; it's all right to see
the worst reduced, as this snow is, to a
clumsy silliness no one could die from
or give up life distractedly sighing in,
but how close we are (still winter) to
what's merciless, as some whisper in the
happiest times: even this if walked into
steadily, boots soaking through, eyes
filling with white, could bring us down,
as something will, we who thought we
could endure anything, and almost did,
as everyone almost did, but didn't, as
spring, that staggers as it walks among
the cold stench of bodies and brisk
heartless blooms, the damp gaps between
the aging trees, reveals.

—Charlie Smith

• •

Meg Gehrts Schomburgk died, of cancer, on March 17, 1966, and her cremated remains were buried in the Hamburg cemetery—"the largest cemetery in the world," Frau Gehrts enthusiastically told me—under a garish red marble plaque. The only people present at her funeral were her brother, Frau Gehrts, and their son; but the Duke of Mecklenburg sent a wreath of flowers.

"A Camera Actress in the Wilds of Togoland" was published by Seeley, Service & Company, Ltd., in 1915. In the foreword, Meg included among her acknowledgments a special thanks to her "friend, Mr. C. L. McCluer Stevens, of 'Ivydene,' New Malden, Surrey, author and journalist, for the skilful and painstaking manner in which he has edited my rough manuscript." In fact, Mr. Stevens was, strictly speaking, not a journalist but a writer of boys' adventure stories for such popular magazines as *The Boys' Journal*, *British Boys*, and *Scout*, the magazine of the Boy Scouts. He specialized in tales set in the more exotic corners of the Empire: "Fighting the Mad Mullah," "The Story of Abu Klea," "The Black Jaws of Khyber," "How a Naval Lieutenant Turned Highwayman!," "When Havelock Came to Lucknow." In *The Boys' Journal* for the week ending June 20, 1914—just before Schomburgk's première at the Philharmonic Hall—a new adventure series began, entitled "The Lion Hunters: A Story of Wildest Africa," which turned out to be about an expedition of "film-takers" that greatly resembled Schomburgk's.

In the months in which the series ran, the filmmakers had predictable encounters with a variety of dangerous wild beasts and tribesmen, during which they diligently continued to make their films. These conscientious efforts were rewarded on the day a group of Africans came to their camp, led by the trusty Sambo, who had been responsible for carrying the exposed film to the coast, for shipment to England:

> Sambo was the bearer of two letters—one from a Portuguese trader; the other was a copy of a cablegram the trader had received from the Markham Film Company. . . . Tom Hinton . . . turned eagerly to the yellow envelope containing the cablegram. As he read it his brother and the others watched his face. At first he looked surprised, and then a smile of satisfaction spread over his features.
>
> "What is it?" asked Frank.
>
> "Listen to this," replied Tom.
>
> "This is all Sir James Markham says:

'Good for you, Hinton! The early films are excellent!' "

Toward the end of the filmmakers series is an episode entitled "The White Deliverer," in which the members of the crew approach the kingdom of the Oewela and, to their great surprise, are met by Africans in flowing white robes, who reverently raise their spears and prostrate themselves before them. Here their hunchback guide, N'Gonlu, solemnly tells Frank Hinton, the hero's younger brother, that he is "a god to these men" and must follow them to the Oewela palace:

> Around the entrance were packed thousands of the Oewela, and standing upon the middle step, clad in a beautiful flowing robe of white, in which were sewn diamonds, rubies, sapphires, and emeralds, with a golden crown upon her head, and surrounded by her councillors, was a beautiful white girl of about twenty-two years.

This is Helen Braid, a missionary's orphaned daughter, reared among the Oewela to be their queen; needless to say, she is rescued by Hinton and carried to the safety of civilization.

The motif of a white queen or goddess is standard fare in European mythology—the idea for "The White Goddess of the Wangora," after all, had been given to Schomburgk by the editor of a film magazine. Nevertheless, it would not be straining the bounds of probability to conclude that the author of the filmmakers series, one Edward C. Adams, had been well informed about the Schomburgk expedition by his colleague McCluer Stevens, the editor of Meg's book. (Nor is it entirely out of the question that Adams and Stevens were the same man: the free-lance writers of these magazines routinely took pseudonyms. McCluer Stevens can be traced to the address cited in Meg's book through Surrey County Records, but nothing is known about Adams except the names of the journals for which he wrote.)

It is reasonable to assume that the Schomburgk expedition, either as it was reported in the press or as it was described in Meg's manuscript, influenced this writer of boys' fiction. But to what extent did the writer of boys' fiction influence the book? The first of several perplexing questions is why Meg's book was written in English, and published in both England and America, but never appeared in a German edition in Germany. (The Gehrts family was not aware that Meg had ever written a book.) Dates are also

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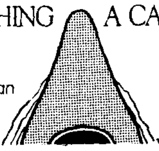

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problematic: the fact that the Eleonore Woermann arrived back in England toward the end of March, 1914, and that Schomburgk and Meg left England for the Continent sometime before mid-July suggests that Meg had less than four months in which to write her complex book of some seventy-five thousand words, in a foreign language (according to reports by people who knew her, Meg could "get by" in English but was far from fluent)—unless, of course, one is willing to believe that she went on working on the book in Germany, and that the manuscript was ferried back and forth across the Channel between two enemy states while a war was under way.

The reader of "A Camera Actress" can discern a marked difference in Meg's spirits after she left Aledjo-Kadara, and it seems reasonable to attribute this to her acclimatization to the rigors of safari life. Perhaps, though, Meg did not really change at all, but, as Hodgson claimed, wept from the beginning of the safari until the end, and the heroine's "improvement" is only a wishful bit of boys'-magazine fiction. Perhaps she began her narrative in Britain but left it for her collaborator to finish when she departed for the Continent. Perhaps it was entirely ghostwritten from careful (and always geographically, historically, and anthropologically accurate) notes that either she or Schomburgk had kept throughout.

While the drama of the Togoland expedition, like the film dramas that it produced, can be safely reconstructed in broad outline, important aspects of it remain a matter for speculation. One is forced to recognize the possibility, for example, that the Konkomba people, who the reader is told lined the roads in hundreds for a glimpse of Meg, might have been there not really to worship her but merely out of curiosity; or that their "barbaric" songs might have been not hymns of praise but, rather, as unrepeatable as their speeches delivered into Schomburgk's camera; conceivably, it may even have been the case that the Konkomba never lined the roads at all. But I like to believe that the "airs" Mooshie Gehrts reputedly gave herself derived, at least in part, from her secret knowledge that at one improbable time, in the wild reaches of the Dark Continent, she had been riotously acclaimed as a White Goddess.

—Caroline Alexander

THE THEATRE

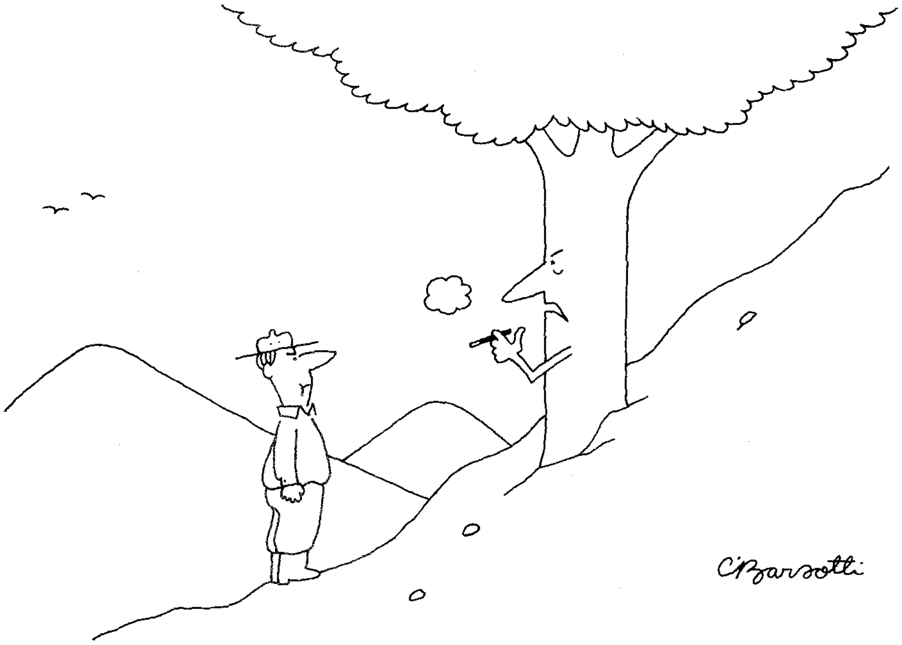
The Dustman

BUCKING Leslie Howard and Rex Harrison, on the one hand, and Lerner and Loewe, on the other, the Roundabout is presenting a decent production of Shaw's "Pygmalion" to celebrate the theatre's twenty-fifth birthday. Decent isn't quite enough. Under Paul Weidner's direction, the performance is somehow tamer than it should be, and this is mainly the fault of the casting of the pivotal roles of Professor Higgins and his protégée, Eliza Doolittle. That splendid actor Anthony Heald, a born Shavian, as he proved in "Misalliance," and a born high comedian, as he proved in "The Foreigner" and "Anything Goes," is wrong for Higgins—not commanding enough or old enough, though surely he is sharp enough. And although Madeleine Potter, an accomplished actress with an impressive record, makes a funny, tantrummy flower girl at Covent Garden, she lacks the required excitement and temperament and beauty of Eliza after the ball. What happens that evening is more than a transformation; it is a metamorphosis. (It must be said in Miss Potter's defense that the pretty dress she wears is nowhere near the ball gown described in the script. "Brilliant" was Shaw's word.)

When Charles Keating entered as Alfred Doolittle, dustman father of Eliza (and spokesman for Shaw), my first thought was: Well, that's more like it. A glorious part and a performance to match; Mr. Keating does for "Pygmalion" what he did for "The Doctor's Dilemma" a while ago at the Roundabout. (His Sir Colenso Ridgeon became the leading role, turning the play askew, but to its great benefit.) Unlike his distinguished forebears—Wilfrid Lawson in the movie, and Stanley Holloway in "My Fair Lady"—Mr. Keating, just as distinguished, is a tall, thin man: a scrawny dustman and a svelte reluctant recruit to the middle class.

Complaints over, I must also say that Anne Pitoniak, as Mrs. Higgins, is, as usual, very good, and so are Earle Hyman, as the considerate, courtly Colonel Pickering, and Joyce Worsley, as Mrs. Pearce, the landlady. And, despite the aforementioned reservations, there isn't a dull moment in this gorgeous play or a scene that doesn't live. Shaw is the star—and of the first magnitude in this instance. John Conklin's single, all-purpose setting, with a couple of Pre-Raphaelite portraits on the wall and a scattering of chairs and artifacts and props, doesn't add much, but it helps speed the action along.

—EDITH OLIVER



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MUSICAL EVENTS

Asking for More

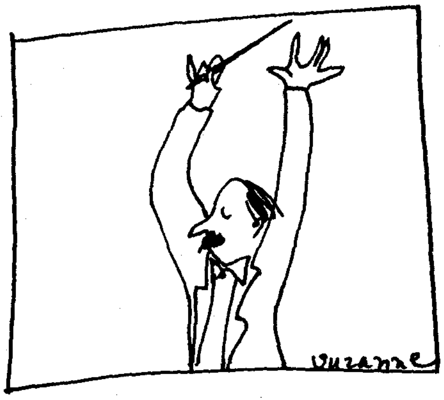
Richard Westenburg assembled an attractive program for his Musica Sacra concert in Alice Tully Hall last month. The first half was music by Max Reger, a composer less often heard than once he was. (Mozart Year will surely bring us a performance or two of the Variations and Fugue on a Theme of Mozart, Opus 132, one of his best works.) Into a short life (1873-1916) he packed a prodigious amount of composition, the while conducting, busily playing the organ and the piano, teaching, copiously editing and arranging, writing controversial articles, and making many friends and foes. He lived life to the full, and died of a heart attack in the small hours of a convivial gathering with old friends. There is no obstacle to knowing a good deal of Reger's music—the list of available recordings fills nearly three columns of the *Opus* catalogue—but the sheer amount of it, and the amount of sheer composition within almost any one of his works, can prove daunting. Like Handel, Reger was a famous glutton, and he seems musically gluttonous, too. Yet, as Edward Sackville-West wrote, "to anyone . . . who takes pleasure in powerful musicianship, architectural grandeur, and a limitless capacity for elaborate modulation, Reger's orchestral and chamber music will not seem unprofitable." Nor will his choral music. The Musica Sacra program included two of his four chorale-based cantatas, "O Haupt voll Blut und Wunden" and "Meinem Jesum lass ich nicht," the first with organ, oboe, and violin in accompaniment, the second with organ, violin, and viola. The first spins on for ten stanzas, the other for six. The choir sings the chorale melody through various harmonies and in various textures (sometimes reduced to a solo line) while through it, around it, between the strophes, between the lines, the instruments spin ceaselessly inventive themes and counterthemes. There is no monotony. The chorale beat is divided into ever-changing metric patterns. The cantatas flow. And the whole seems a wonderful, loving demonstration of what music can achieve. Not without reason was Reger dubbed "the second Bach."

Before the cantatas, we heard Reger's Three Choruses, Opus 6, which he composed when he was nineteen, and four of the sixteen "Tantum ergo" settings in his collection of Simple Liturgical Pieces, Opus 61 (1901). The early choruses, piano-accompanied, are smoothly and pleasingly Brahmsian; the motets, organ-accompanied, present the Communion text ("The ancient patterns give way to a new observance") in well-contrasted interpretative modes and moods. The cantatas mattered most. If the other two of the set ("Vom Himmel hoch" and "O wie selig") are on this level, Musica Sacra must be urged to give us all four next season—but in a resonant church, not in Tully's dry acoustics.

In the second half of the concert, there was a new work, Bernard Rands's song cycle for unaccompanied chorus "Canti d'Amor," a consortium commission for Musica Sacra and two other choirs, the Dale Warland Singers and Chanticleer. Rands has set fifteen poems from James Joyce's "Chamber Music." The verses are "words for music" with no "perhaps" about it:

> Strings in the earth and air
>   Make music sweet. . . .
>
> The old piano plays an air,
>   Sedate and slow and gay. . . .
>
> Gentle lady, do not sing
>   Sad songs about the end of
>   love. . . .

Rands has heard the music in the lines and found notes for it, employing his sure ear for assonances, sonorities, harmonies, rhythms. The spacing and placing of the very first chord, a tower of hummed bare fifths, is a happy invention, simple but striking. He has written an able, pleasing piece. If that description sounds guarded, it is only because thirty or so years ago he stirred enthusiastic attention as a challenger ready to displease audiences in his uncompromising pursuit of more controversial musical visions. "Canti d'Amor" challenges only its executants.

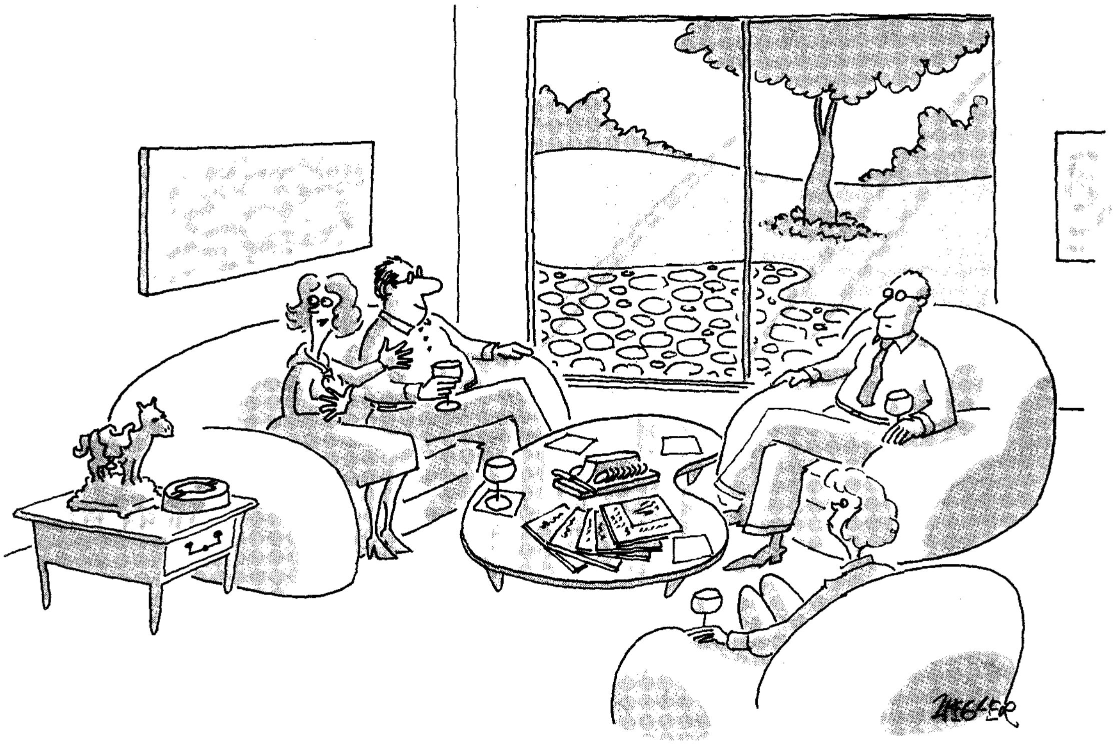


The Musica Sacra Chorus, twenty-four strong, met the challenge. It is an expert body. Its tuning was impeccable. The harmonies sounded without fuzz. Words were clear, rhythms precise. During the evening, nine singers stepped from the choral ranks to sing solos and sang them with a purity and a steadiness of tone to demonstrate why the ensemble was so sure. Gregory Hostetler, a soloist in the Rands, was the best of all; he sounded words so well as to make one want to hear his Tamino. Karen Krueger was an alto boylike-true in a stanza of Reger. Gregory Purnhagen was winning and communicative in one of the four Swingle pieces that—with tabor, shawm, and fife effects vocally achieved, and swing in the rhythms—provided a virtuoso coda to the evening.

The choir's volume hardly rose above mezzo forte, and that was at once a virtue and a limitation. The narrowing of the dynamic range helped to insure true intonation, pure tone, and balanced timbre. There was never any forcing. Nor, however, was there the excitement of risk-taking, or a big, stirring sound swelling to fill the hall. But one can't have everything, and no choir can hope to set ringing Tully's dead, unresponsive space. Lincoln Center should invite into its regular-audience, regular-presentation ambit one or two of the resonant churches that surround it. Tully's unflattering, baldly frontal acoustics did at least show how accurate Mr. Westenburg's singers were. Reger and Rands were clearly, if clinically, heard.

The next day, the Choral Symphony Society gave a concert in Christ and St. Stephen's Church, on West Sixty-ninth Street, just north of Lincoln Center. The choir, conducted by David Labovitz, was sixteen strong. It included Mr. Hostetler, Mr. Purnhagen, and three other Musica Sacra members in its ranks. I was able to attend only the first part of the concert—Miriam Gideon's early Three Madrigals

(1935) and Samuel Barber's early "Reincarnations" (1937-40). (Later, there was Bartók, Janáček's Mass, Bruckner motets, and Brahms's Love-Song Waltzes.) The performances, though good, did not have Musica Sacra polish; blend and balance were less refined. But the sound in the church was warm, glowing. The building responded. (So did the Church of St. Mary the Virgin to the Taverner Consort and Players—eight singers and five players, directed by Andrew Parrott—in its polished, poised account of a Vesper sequence drawn from Monteverdi's "Selva Morale e Spirituale.")



"But everything seems so neat and orderly we'd never guess that your lives are falling apart."

• •

THERE was more Rands the following day. In Carnegie Hall, the Philadelphia Orchestra, whose composer-in-residence he is, gave the first performance of "Ceremonial 3," a Carnegie centenary commission. Riccardo Muti conducted. Bernard Jacobson, in the program note, couched his observation of Rands's development in terms more favoring than mine:

> There was a time when expressive cordiality was not what came first to mind on encountering a Rands piece. But that was back in the sixties, when Western music was still largely in thrall to stylistic preconceptions emphasizing intellectual control rather than emotion, when "beauty" was seen by many in the profession as an inadmissible if not a dirty word. . . . Rands has effected a notable escape from the endemic aridity that dominated other composers in those days.

"Ceremonial 3," which lasts about fourteen minutes, is composed with mastery for a large orchestra, and is a cordial piece. A melody alternates with a succession of chords, and the two interact. In concerto-for-orchestra fashion, the discourse brings forward virtuoso players in varied groupings; traditional instrumental allegiances mingle with combinations unconventional. It is all skillfully done, admirable in its way, and palatable to listeners who may in their hearts still miss Dr. Ormandy. (The start of "Ceremonial 3" was delayed by an entry of latecomers; Mr. Muti lowered the baton he had raised, and waited. I heard behind me the whispered comment "So far, I like it.") Before the Rands, Anne-Sophie Mutter played the Tchaikovsky Violin Concerto, and the concert ended with a flamboyant account of Elgar's "In the South"—the conductor's choreography ate up the podium—which brought the audience to its feet, cheering.

NOT in the "arid" sixties but back in the late forties, Roger Sessions—in the Juilliard lectures published as "The Musical Experience of Composer, Performer, Listener"—considered the slogan "Give the public what it wants" ("sometimes couched in more refined and even quasi-intellectual terms") and, not intemperately but with sympathy and wisdom, pointed to its dangers for composers and public alike:

> Composers, like poets, are born, not made; but once born, they have to grow. It is in this sense that a culture will, generally speaking, get the music that it demands. The question . . . is what we demand of the composer. Do we demand always what is easiest . . . or do we seriously want from him the best that he has to give? In the latter case, are we willing to come to meet him, to make whatever effort is demanded of us as listeners, in order to get from his music what it has to give us? . . . On the answer we ultimately give depends the future of music in the United States.

It seems to me that audiences—particularly orchestra audiences—are becoming both less demanding and less willing to make "whatever effort is demanded of us as listeners." Challenging, difficult new orchestra pieces are expensive to rehearse and are unpopular with those who would "market" classical music to the widest possible audiences; they are not "in demand." And while there has always been a steady supply of new music without tears—easy, agreeable new music that does not sound too different from the old music—a readiness to treat such pieces as respectable, admirable, even important, is surely growing. This year in New York I have heard—with near-disbelief that the performances were being given in public, and prominently—two "neoromantic" piano concertos that sounded like Sons of Warsaw Concerto (although they were less skillfully assembled than that neoromantic pas-

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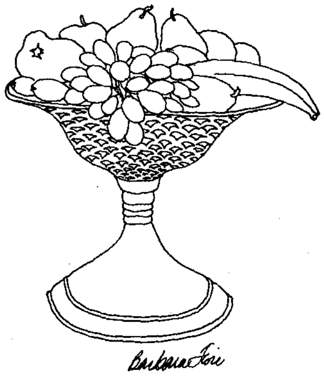
tiche). One was spiced with dashes of "Rhapsody in Blue." ("This young composer is the real thing," David Del Tredici was quoted in the program as saying. "Finally, modern music you can actually listen to . . . with lush string passages and tuneful solos," a reviewer wrote of an earlier work.) Both concertos were by trained, technically competent young composers and were presented with apparent conviction by fine performers.



With concern, mingled with distress or with boredom, we hear new pieces by once arresting composers, apparently "born composers," who have stopped growing. Able, well taught, initially inventive, they have written two or three pieces that made life richer, and have then faded as creators, if not from prominence. Some continue to mine, with diminishing returns, a vein that may perhaps have won a Pulitzer Prize; others grow backward into nostalgia, and assertively (albeit with sincerity and conviction, with "quasi-intellectual" justifications) proclaim and practice the "Give the public what it wants" doctrine. If it is true that everyone has at least one good book in her or him, then perhaps anyone musically literate has at least one good composition. John Harbison has suggested that on American campuses too many young people are taught, for too long, how to compose, are "shrouded in an academic cocoon for years of degree-seeking stasis." Thereafter, they may go on composing away—while teaching other composers—less from artistic compulsion than because that is what they have trained to do. Harbison himself is a born composer, one of the best we have, and a composer who grows. He has created many compositions that make life richer. But in some big-orchestra works even he may have offered less than "the best that he has to give." At any rate, I was somewhat disappointed by his Third Symphony, written for David Zinman and the Baltimore Symphony, and brought by them to Carnegie last month. The symphony is, in the composer's phrase, "a continuous progression of temperamental movements," which are designated Disconsolate, Nostalgic, Militant, Passionate, and Exuberant. It is dedicated to Christopher Rouse. A carillon melody heard in Italy and a Chick Webb drum pattern are among the basic elements; the first movement holds a beautiful viola theme; Mahler and Berg form part of the nostalgia; the finale is exuberant. It is all accomplished but, I thought, unmemorable, familiar.

PETER LIEBERSON, two of whose four orchestra pieces recently had New York premières, is a composer who does not fade. The rich Piano Concerto (1983) that he wrote for Peter Serkin and the Boston Symphony is now on a New World CD. "Drala" (1986), another Boston commission, has been heard widely in Europe, and it was done here in February by the American Composers Orchestra. Paul Lustig Dunkel conducted. The work lasts about seventeen minutes. There are three movements, played without a break: "Invocation—Gathering," "Offerings and Praises," and "Raising Windhorse." The title combines two Tibetan words, *dra*, meaning "enemy" or "adversary," and *la*, meaning "above." Lieberson writes of

> a kind of energy, or a way of being that is beyond common struggle. When a person has attained to this state through his or her development as a human being and through spiritual discipline, we say that person is "raising windhorse." That means the person is at his best, at his peak, galvanized, as if he had arrived on a horse, riding beyond the petty level of aggression and struggle. He is fully awake, he sees, hears, tastes everything more vividly.

What a composer says about a work of his may relate more to intention than to achievement. "Drala," however, does express—and, more, induce in the listener—a feeling of joyous, athletic well-being, an energetic, senses-heightened kind of serenity and happiness. Like all Lieberson's music, it is acutely, actively heard and written along every line, without padding. The composer handles his orchestra with imagination and with new, fertile invention; the string writing and the episodes for small, unusual ensembles are especially striking. Looking at the score after the performance, I found in it words for what I had heard and felt: passages marked "easy and relaxed," "luminous and expressive," "suddenly light and brilliant." In places, the horns "neigh," the double-basses "groan," the trumpets "laugh," the strings "whisper."

Lieberson's next orchestra piece, "Gesar Legend" (1988), which he wrote for the Greater Boston Youth Symphony, has not yet reached New York. "World's Turning," which he wrote for the San Francisco Symphony last year, was brought to Avery Fisher Hall, by the orchestra and Herbert Blomstedt, soon after its San Francisco première, in February. It is a four-seasons composition in five movements, the first movement being "Late Spring," and "Early Spring" the finale. It lasts about eighteen minutes. A memory of Yasujiro Ozu's seasonal films provided one inspiration. The inception was on a late-spring afternoon:

> The air was already quite warm for a Nova Scotia spring; there was a slight breeze. The late-afternoon light was soft, but the colors of the sky and the new buds on the tree outside my window were vivid and luminous. A few birds were singing. There was a feeling of joy and sadness mixed together. . . . Surely everyone has experienced this at some time or another! I was inspired then to explore those moments through the elements of each season.

I responded to "World's Turning" less intensely than to "Drala." I enjoyed the birdsong, the busyness of summer, a sense of fall's richness, the harsh clarity of winter (a movement in which brasses carry the argument), and spring's gentle but powerful return, and I admired the scoring. But the shapes of the musical images seemed, for Lieberson, a little ordinary.

CARNEGIE last month put on a small, well-attended international festival of youth orchestras: five concerts in four days; orchestras from Spain, Japan, Australia, Korea, and New York; free admission; a national composition on each bill. I caught two of the concerts. The New York Youth Symphony, conducted by Samuel Wong, presented its twentieth commission for a brief big-orchestra work by a young American. This was "Awakening," by David Dzubay, who was born in 1964. It is conventional (nine minutes of progress from "dark foreboding rumblings" to "increasingly faster, louder, and more animated music"), capably scored, and confident. Not for the first time in this series of commissions, the prospect of writing for many spirited, expert, and thoroughly rehearsed young players seems to have tempted a young composer into some passages of overelaboration and extravagance. But who can blame him for seizing the opportunity? Beethoven's beautiful, often underrated Triple Concerto, which is played seldom enough to remain fresh, and Copland's Third Symphony followed.

The Camerata of the Australian Youth Orchestra, thirty-six strong, conducted by John Hopkins, played Peter Sculthorpe's "Port Essington" (1977), for string trio and string orchestra. A note in the score tells us that at Port Essington, in Australia's Northern Territory, settlement was twice attempted, in 1824 and 1838, and twice abandoned. The reason the settlement failed "was, simply, that those living there were unable to adapt to the peculiar conditions of the land . . . an endless Capricornian summer." The piece, which lasted about fifteen minutes, is a double set of variations. The orchestra, representing the land, has a theme based on an aboriginal melody—driving repetitions, of fascinating rhythmic and accentual intricacy, within a four-note compass (plus an occasional chromatic inflection). The trio, representing the settlement, has a blameless little C-major Victorian march as its theme. It plays this first with a double-bass pedal C from the "outside world" as background, and continues bravely with its variations when sounds more exotic threaten the stability. There are six, continuous movements: The Bush, The Settlement, Unrest (a fantasy), Estrangement (a nocturne), Farewell (an arietta marked "con desiderio pieno di malinconia," in which the orchestra takes up the settlers' tune, "suggesting that some kind of agreement could have been possible"), and again The Bush (but now the aboriginal melody spans five notes, those with which the Victorian march started). This is a modest, imaginative, and moving composition. (It is recorded on the Southern Cross label.) The score, which is published by Faber, confirms the refinement, subtlety, and originality of the working. The performance was poetic and colorful.

—ANDREW PORTER

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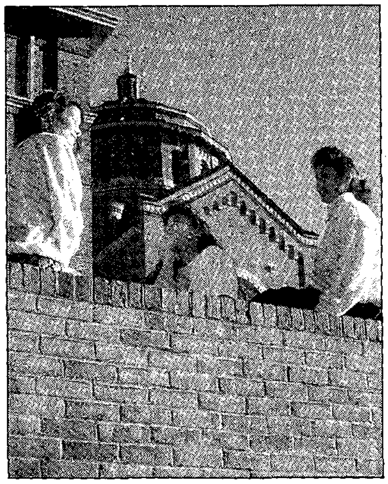

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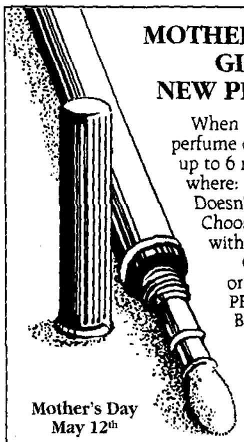

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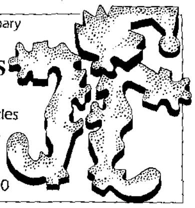

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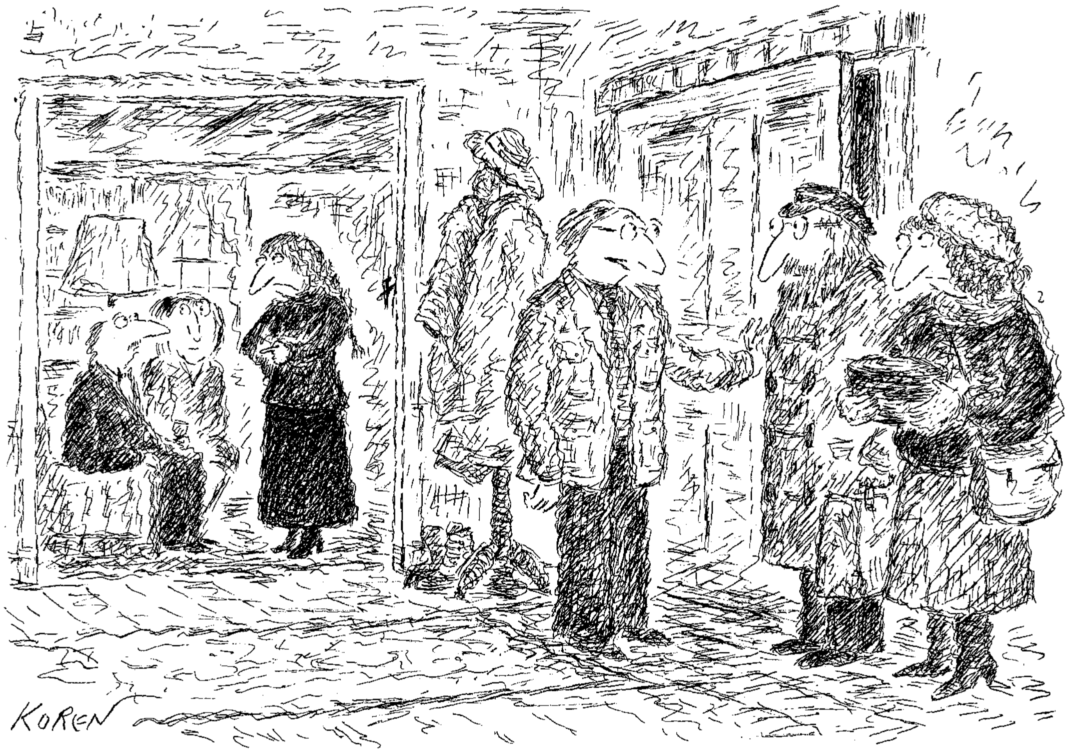
THE CURRENT CINEMA

Colonial and Gothic

THE hero of Joyce Cary's 1939 novel "Mister Johnson" is a young Nigerian who works for British colonists in a remote rural outpost. It's an audacious book, with a dry, even style but a very volatile tone. The narration is in the present tense, because, Cary later explained, he wanted to create in his readers the sensation of being "carried unreflecting on the stream of events" and to make us feel "not contemplative but agitated." Johnson is an outsized, broadly conceived comic invention, and it's not always easy to know what to make of him: his actions and, especially, his language are so outrageous that they verge on caricature, and we fear that Cary is trying to get laughs out of an offensive stereotype—the childlike, buffoonish primitive who wants to imitate the "civilized" manners of his masters but can't quite bring it off. By any conventional standard, Mister Johnson is a fool. He seems to identify more strongly with his employers than with his countrymen: he wears heavy English shoes and composes grandiose songs of praise to "England, my home" (he's never been there); he serves the stolid, pipe-smoking colonial district officer, Harry Rudbeck, with ferocious enthusiasm; and he boasts of his great friendship with his boss (who in private moments with his wife often refers to Johnson as "Mister Wog"). And even when a white man treats him badly his anger doesn't last long: he forgives, then forgets, then goes on, with a big smile, as if nothing important had happened—he's impervious to disillusionment.

Johnson is a fool, but he is hardly a simple one. There's nothing abject about his eagerness to serve the British; he isn't at all afraid of them. For him, the ways of the white man's civilization are the elements of a romance, an epic song full of color and grand adventure. Johnson approaches everything in his life—not just the British—this way: his imagination turns his wife, an uneducated and rather suspicious village girl whom he has bought from her family, into a shining ideal of beauty and devotion. He looks at the world through the eyes of a poet, and transforms all he sees. Johnson is—like Cary's best-known character, the rascally painter Gulley Jimson, of "The Horse's Mouth"—a pure eccentric and a natural artist, a man who experiences life as an occasion for creative play, and manipulates reality rather than adapts himself to it. And this sort of temperament makes Johnson, like the infuriating Jimson, a very troublesome member of any society—an ungovernable spirit. What interests Cary isn't the conflict between the culture of West Africa and that of its imperialist occupiers but the contrast between the wild fertility of an artist's imagination and the barrenness of his actual circumstances. (The tribal organizations, the native government, the colonial administration, and the land itself seem equally rigorous and unyielding.) Cary shows his affinity with his hero by using Johnson's culture as freely and as unscrupulously as Johnson uses that of the British: in the end, this stylized African character and his English creator seem to merge—artists united in the irrepressible, lawless spirit of play.

The movie version of the book, directed by Bruce Beresford from a screenplay by William Boyd, is skillful, handsome, and consistently enjoyable, but its effect on the audience is virtually the opposite of what Cary intended: we feel contemplative, not agitated. Beresford, whose credits include "Breaker Morant" and "Driving Miss Daisy," has a careful, studied style, which can be extremely effective with some kinds of material. But he has, in Cary's terms, no present tense. His scrupulous approach makes "Mister Johnson" seem a far more conventional colonial satire than it really is. The individual scenes play well, because Beresford is a sensitive director of actors. Maynard Eziashi, a British-educated Nigerian actor, is a splendid Johnson; the movie's few surviving traces of Cary's complex wit are all contained in fleeting expressions on the actor's broad, smiling face. When Rudbeck offers Mister Johnson a dish of English plum pudding, Eziashi does a miraculously



"I want to forewarn you—tonight's topic seems to be phallocentrism, and Jessica is in a take-no-prisoners mood."

subtle piece of acting, showing us how Johnson's split second of shock at this first taste is transformed almost instantaneously into an illusion of pleasure, and we understand, suddenly, the overwhelming power of the character's imagination: the delicious *idea* of eating plum pudding has a stronger reality for him than the evidence of his offended senses. This is the picture's finest moment—a few seconds of spontaneous comic poetry.

For most of the film, though, Beresford directs like an intelligent man who just isn't quite getting the point. One of the key motifs of the story is the construction of a road through the district; this project has been initiated by Rudbeck (Pierce Brosnan), for no more compelling reason than that his first superior in the colonial service instilled in him, to quote Cary, "the belief that to build a road, any road anywhere, is the noblest work a man can do." The novel makes it clear that Rudbeck's road-building hobbyhorse is simply a received idea, and that the fervor with which he carries it out has nothing to do with vision or imagination—quite the reverse. The movie doesn't fill us in on the source of Rudbeck's passion, and Beresford treats the construction of the road as an opportunity for spectacle, as if it really were a glorious achievement: the scene in which the project is completed and the first truck rolls toward the capital of Rudbeck's district is elaborately staged, with swelling music and cries of triumph. One of the ironies of the road is that it owes its existence, essentially, not to Rudbeck's doggedness but to Johnson's creativity. It's Johnson who convinces his boss that the road can be extended to meet the distant main highway—a notion that's initially far beyond Rudbeck's not very wild dreams—and Johnson who, with his free and easy approach to material obstacles, finds solutions to the economics of the project: he shifts funds within the district's budget, cajoles whole villages into working for next to nothing, and imposes on travellers (i.e., extorts) a "road fee." Beresford pounds home the irony that Johnson's crimes in the service of his colonial master's idée fixe lead, finally, to his own downfall—that he is ultimately punished, rather than rewarded, for his role in the Englishman's success. But Beresford doesn't seem to grasp the greater irony,

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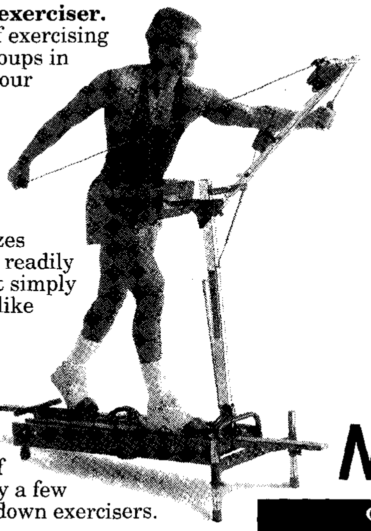

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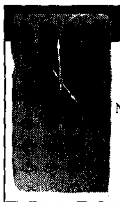

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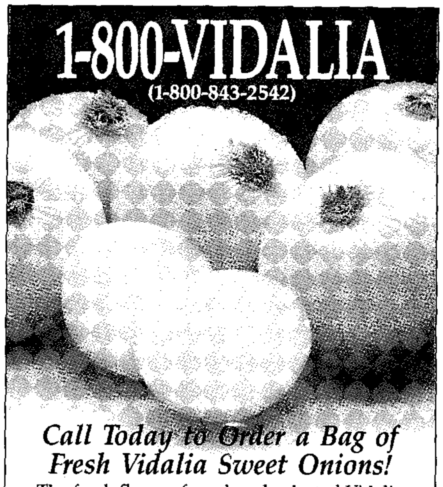

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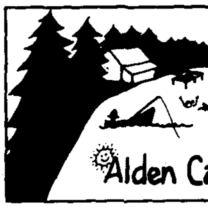

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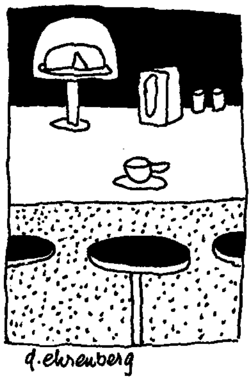
HANDMADE IN EGYPT

which is that the road is rather a paltry triumph—something conceived with no clear purpose, and insignificant and unlovely in itself. The actual road is nothing; the glory is in Johnson's epic imagining of it, the song he makes of it, the poetry he creates to replace the dull, mean realities of colonial life. If "Mister Johnson" were truly a story of the clash of European and African cultures, the freedom and beauty of Johnson's fantasies might seem cold comfort; that's all we feel at the end of the movie. Cary conceived something larger and more deeply ironic, a breathtaking joke on all the foursquare, confident road builders, the upholders of society. And it's a joke that the people who made this picture, for all their craft and competence, don't appear to be in on. The novel is a song; the movie is a solid, sturdy road.



Paul Schrader's "The Comfort of Strangers" is also based on a novel by a respected English writer—in this case, a slight, overwrought exercise in neo-gothic nastiness by Ian McEwan. The movie improves on its source in almost every respect, and by very peculiar means: Schrader skims the surface of the novel, speeding right over anything in the story that threatens to suggest "depth" or "meaning." McEwan's narrative is a kinky contemporary variation on the sort of plot that made Victorian readers of Wilkie Collins and Sheridan Le Fanu shiver—the story of innocents lured into the clutches of charming villains. The innocents here are an unmarried English couple, Mary (Natasha Richardson) and Colin (Rupert Everett), who are vacationing in Venice; the evil seducers are a husband and wife, Robert (Christopher Walken) and Caroline (Helen Mirren), whose tastes run to voyeurism and sadomasochism; the dread lair in which the monsters toy with their prey is a huge, ornately furnished apartment with a spectacular view of the city. McEwan decorates this pulp-fiction situation with long passages of fluid, important-sounding literary prose, and works strenuously to make the frail narrative deliver a mighty theme; his desperate efforts bring forth nothing but a handful of terrible ideas about the nature of sexual relations. The screenplay, by Harold Pinter, retains most of the book's dialogue and incidents, adds some edgy, bored-on-holiday exchanges between Colin and Mary, and jettisons McEwan's dubious psychology. For once, Pinter's trademark style functions as a relief; the bickering, the subtle cruelty, the hostile pauses, and the vague menace all seem refreshingly pointless.

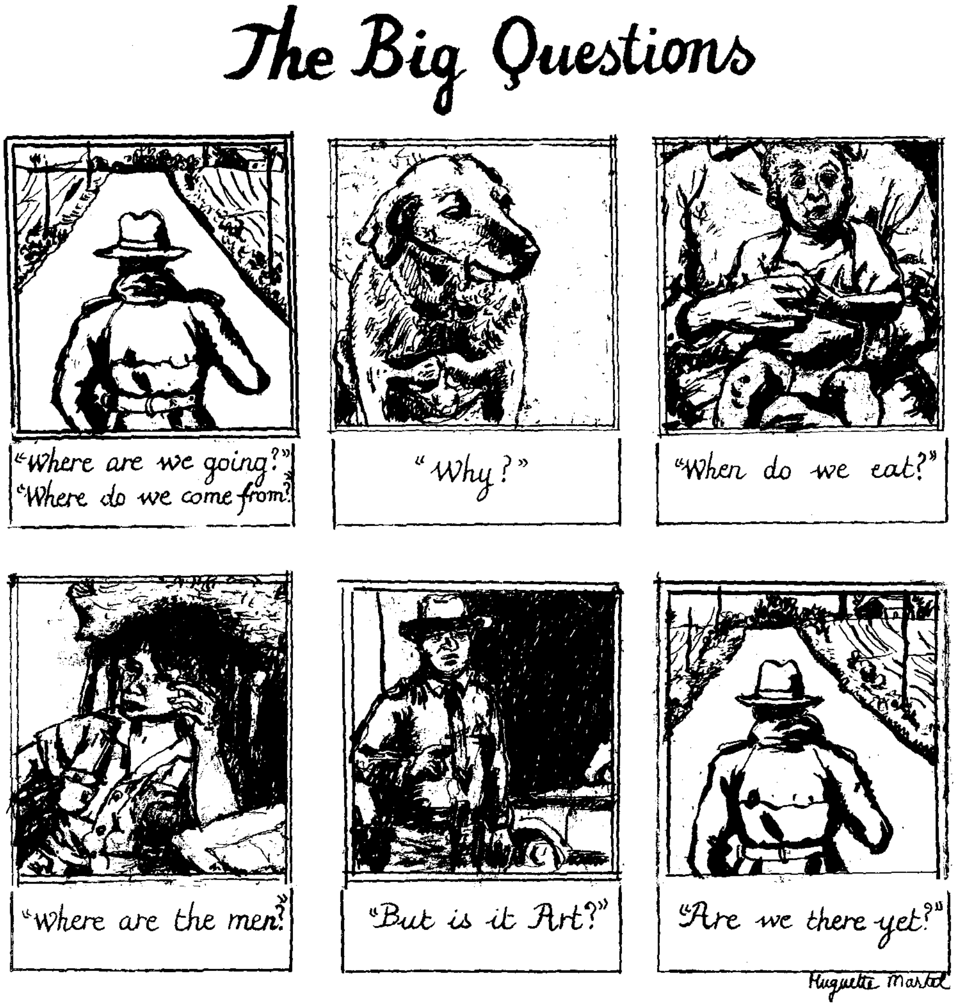
Schrader concentrates on the atmosphere and the performances, and he does an expert job. He dresses his characters in Armani and sets the camera in motion to swirl gracefully around them, picking up miragelike shimmers from the canals and beautiful but ominous architectural details; the languorous and virtually ceaseless camera movement creates an authentically gothic sense of catastrophe just around the corner. And when he gets to the story's violent climax, his attention to style is vindicated. He gathers his four characters—who have been circling and stalking each other as restlessly as the camera has been following them—in Robert and Caroline's apartment for a final reckoning, and he executes, at the moment of truth, a grand, sweeping gesture with the camera, a kind of veronica: he resolves the movie's tensions *visually*, so this climactic scene, which isn't very convincing in psychological terms, is more effective than it has any right to be. Schrader treats the story as an elegant horror-movie game, a trick done with mirrors, and he carries it off: he makes McEwan's worst ideas vanish into the Venetian haze. Walken glides effortlessly through his role as the embodiment of Old World evil. He plays Robert with a lordly, sinister air, and suggests, as well, that he's wearing something really odd underneath his superbly tailored white suits. And Richardson is characteristically amazing. Her reactions are always surprising but always natural; she brings a touch of humanity to this rather formal party. "The Comfort of Strangers" isn't a major accomplishment, and it's still pretty nasty stuff, but it's smooth and coherent (aesthetically, at least). Schrader and his team have extracted a shiny genre horror movie from the murk of literary seriousness. —Terrence Rafferty

LETTER FROM HONG KONG

MORE than three hundred thousand American dollars' worth of fireworks exploding over Victoria Harbor on February 14th welcomed the Chinese lunar New Year here, and if the display seemed to me less spectacular than Fourth of July observances over the East River—and far less deafening than the usual pandemonium in Beijing, where this year an officially estimated one billion two hundred million firecrackers were set off—I have to say that it appeared to gratify the hundreds of thousands of Hong Kongers who watched with me. There is disagreement about whether this is the Year of the Goat, the Sheep, or the Ram: the Asian cycle of years named after animals stems from a legendary invitation extended by Buddha to all animals; years were awarded to the twelve who came to see him, but the identity of the creature arriving between the horse and the monkey is ambiguous, since the Chinese character 羊 can stand for any of these. Red, white, green, and yellow streamers, reflected in the windows of office towers, drew Cantonese murmurs of "Wooo-ah" from those lining the shores of downtown Victoria and Kowloon and packed aboard boats in between. And when the final cacophony of three thousand nearly simultaneous shells died away those in the crowd around me cheered before turning toward the subway and heading home. Perhaps they were simply glad to have something we could all celebrate. The event came just three weeks after a noncelebration—the sesquicentennial of Britain's acquisition of the island the Cantonese called Heung Gong ("Fragrant Harbor").

On January 26, 1841, a party of seamen from the survey ship H.M.S. Sulphur came ashore here to drink Queen Victoria's health, and the following day a squadron arrived to raise the Union Jack, enforcing a concession that had been wrested from China's Manchu commissioners by Her Majesty's gunboats. (Not that the British Foreign Secretary, Lord Palmerston, was pleased with the thirty-square-mile prize, whose indigenous population of fewer than five thousand consisted mostly of fishermen and pirates. He correctly described Hong Kong then as "a barren Island with hardly a House upon it"—a view later subscribed to by Mao Zedong, who referred to it as "that wasteland of an island.") Subsequent agreements with China increased Britain's territorial jurisdiction, first to the four-and-a-half-square-mile Kowloon Peninsula, across the harbor, and then to the New Territories—an area that encompasses the hilly region extending north from Kowloon to the Sham Chun River, along with two hundred and thirty-four more islands, one of them, Lantau, bigger than the original. The Territory of Hong Kong now comprises a total landmass of more than four hundred square miles, and has a registered population of approximately five million eight hundred thousand, plus uncounted numbers of illegal immigrants. Since that 1841 toast to the Queen, one obligation that Britain's erstwhile "Gibraltar of the East" has never neglected is colonial ceremony—Jardine Matheson, the original *hong*, or commercial establishment, still fires a noonday gun over the harbor—and yet the sesquicentennial passed with no Territorial observance at all. The government's principal officials discussed the matter, according to Mrs. Irene Yau, the director of Hong Kong's information services. "And, really, we just thought, So what? A hundred and fifty years is not that big a thing."

It may not be, at that—now that we have passed the halfway point to 1997, a year that seemed comfortably distant in 1984, when it was agreed that Hong Kong would then revert to China. In line with tradition, no Hong Konger took part in negotiating the Sino-British Joint Agreement by which the reversion was mandated. For a century and a half now, while the colony and its residents have been the subject of negotiations between Mandarin and English speakers, the Cantonese speakers of Hong Kong have gone their own way, which is that of the trader, ignoring whenever possible the governments

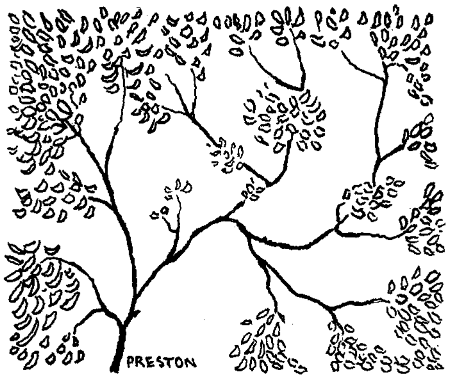

The Big Questions
"Where are we going?"
"Where do we come from?"
"Why?"
"When do we eat?"
"Where are the men?"
"But is it Art?"
"Are we there yet?"
Huguette Martel

that their British (and, during the Second World War, their Japanese) occupiers imposed on them. Perhaps that's why Hong Kong seems to me to be the most defiantly Chinese of all Asian cities.

Two years ago, there was a brief interruption in this history of political indifference. Hong Kong has endured rioting—most recently in 1967, when the Cultural Revolution looked as if it might be spilling over here—but when it came to organized demonstrations, as the journalist Kevin Rafferty wrote in a 1989 book, "City on the Rocks," "any gathering of five hundred people to discuss a political issue in the colony was a monster-sized rally." Nevertheless, on June 4, 1989, the date of the massacre at Tiananmen Square, and on the two Sundays thereafter, hundreds of thousands of Hong Kongers marched in more or less orderly protests, nominally directed at China but also pointed in the direction of Britain. Martin Lee Chu-ming, a legislative councillor who personifies the nearest thing the Territorial government can point to as a loyal opposition, compared the turning over of Hong Kongers to China with giving Jews to Hitlerian Germany. Except for a sizable rally last year to mark the Tiananmen anniversary, the extent of protest has dwindled to sporadic demonstrations by several hundred students outside a converted hotel that houses the Hong Kong bureau of Xinhua, the New China News Agency. (After the proclamation of the People's Republic, in 1949, Mao Zedong refused, as a matter of protocol, to establish a consulate on territory that China formally regards as having been stolen from it through "unequal treaties." Instead, he and his successors have posted Foreign Ministry officials to direct the news bureau, which now numbers six hundred, almost all of them diplomatic staff.)

On the last Sunday in January, I took in one such demonstration—a protest against the conviction and imprisonment in China of Wang Dan and the trials of other Tiananmen dissidents—and found it far better disciplined, and less spirited, than the student marches I watched in Beijing two years ago (or, for that matter, the Columbia University sit-ins of 1968). Though their portable loudspeakers enabled them to make plenty of noise, the banner-waving Hong Kong students encountered no reciprocal enthusiasm—and, indeed, attracted almost no attention, as they were shepherded by police on a designated route through Central District, Victoria's downtown. A speakers' platform had been erected for them on the street in front of the Xinhua building, which was protected by police barricades, and when the demonstrators arrived there they folded their banners, repositioned their loudspeakers to target all twenty-one floors of the building, and sat decorously in rows in a single traffic lane, which had been cordoned off to protect them from passing cars. The proceedings consisted of a number of speeches and chants ("Wang Dan is not guilty," "Down with Communism," "Patriotism is not a crime"), and the burning of a mock copy of China's constitution. Rather tame stuff, I thought, but apparently it did not go unnoticed inside Xinhua. Two weeks later, China's senior leader, Deng Xiaoping, issued a warning against Hong Kong movements whose leaders "even burn China's Constitution and the Hong Kong Basic Law." Their members, he noted pointedly, would certainly be excluded from the future Hong Kong government.

BRITAIN once excluded Hong Kongers from their own government; now China threatens to do so. At least so far, however, the political activists are not to be excluded from Hong Kong itself, as are some fifty thousand Vietnamese boat people—or "migrants," as the government calls them, on the ground that most now make their way here overland and board boats just to be ferried around the twenty-six-mile-long, sixteen-foot-high barbed-wire fence that imperfectly separates Hong Kong from China. The first groups of Vietnamese refugees, arriving here in the mid-seventies, were the survivors of an eight-hundred-mile crossing of the South China Sea; whatever their successors are to be called now, most who have not found asylum elsewhere are being kept out of sight, in remote camps consisting of rows of barracks surrounded by wire fences and surmounted by guard towers. Officers of the Hong Kong Correctional Services Department make sure that the inmates don't get out, and that workers for relief agencies and troublesome legal-aid lawyers have difficulty getting in to help them. Except when rioting occurs (often sparked by fighting between North and South Vietnamese) or a particularly notable court case comes up, these people are virtual nonpersons here; they receive public and press attention primarily in terms of their numbers and the sums of money being spent to keep, process, and transport them—U.S. $340 million since 1979, the government estimates. In theory, a substantial part of this is an obligation of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, but at the end of last year the U.N.H.C.R. was more than thirty-three million dollars behind on the payments, perhaps because most of the twenty-nine United Nations members who agreed to bear the cost of caring for Vietnamese boat people here and in Thailand are themselves in arrears.



The U.N.H.C.R. is also responsible for monitoring the process that determines whether a refugee is accepted for asylum or should be repatriated. "Screening in" and "screening out" of migrants began three years ago, when the Territory's government, alarmed by their increasing numbers, ruled that in order to be accepted for resettlement refugees would have to demonstrate "a well-founded fear of persecution in Vietnam," and that those who could not would be returned there. So far, the process has screened in only about twelve per cent of the boat people interviewed, and although last year more than five thousand of those who were screened out agreed to be repatriated, nearly forty-four thousand boat people who had been rejected or whose cases were still pending remained in custody at the end of the year, along with eight thousand who had been classified as refugees and were waiting in the camps to be accepted abroad.

It is ironic that in this city of asylum, populated predominantly by migrants from China and their descendants (many of whom are themselves now seeking asylum elsewhere), public-opinion polls show that ninety per cent of Hong Kongers would deny asylum to the boat people, and, in fact, endorse returning them immediately—forcibly, if necessary. However, Sino-Vietnamese antipathy dates back even further than 1841, and if illegal immigrants from the People's Republic can be arrested (last year nearly twenty thousand were) and deported either immediately or after jail terms of up to fifteen months, Hong Kongers ask, why not Vietnamese? One answer is that China takes back those who are involuntarily deported, whereas Vietnam is reluctant to do so; in December of 1989, when Hong Kong forced fifty-one Vietnamese, who were screaming in protest, aboard a plane to Hanoi, international objections were such that further involuntary repatriations were cancelled in favor of a program of persuading those not selected for asylum to agree to being returned. Last year, America's leadership of international protests against forced repatriation of the boat people was characterized as "unfair and unjust" by Hong Kong's governor, Sir David Wilson, and Robert Van Leeuwen, the local U.N.H.C.R. representative, complained that Voice of America broadcasts beamed to Vietnam are encouraging would-be migrants "to leave their country without a full realization of what faces them."

Conditions in the camps have been described by refugee-rights advocates as "inhuman," and the Hong Kong Bar Association, in a submission to the United Nations Human Rights Committee, recently charged that "people who have committed no criminal offense are detained essentially without rights in prison-like camps and with scant protection against abuse of power." Still, some of the Vietnamese have lived here for years now, completely isolated from Hong Kong, which may well be fine with most of them: they have some access to television and newspapers, and they know how they are regarded by Hong Kongers. They also know that the People's Republic, apparently less squeamish about international opinion than the Territorial government is, says that, one way or another, they will all be sent home in 1997. Until then, they hang on, hoping somehow to get somewhere else. Their preferences are Canada, Australia, and the United States, in that order; although Hong Kong ultimately authorized an annual quota of two hundred and fifty qualified refugees for resettlement, last year only five of these places were filled. There are boat people, though, who would like to see a little of the place while they're here, as one inmate who had made a brief escape recently told a Hong Kong judge; his explanation was accepted as reasonable.

Filipinos working here on domestic-labor contracts are a good deal more visible than the boat people, but are conspicuous only on Sundays. One of the more striking sights of this city is the gathering of amahs—maids and nannies—on their day off, when they turn the squares, sidewalks, and pedestrian overpasses of Central District into their own Tagalog-speaking community. Many bring along bags or shopping carts filled with Filipino dishes, which they trade or covertly sell (covertly because the acceptance of cash would violate Hong Kong's ordinance against unlicensed peddling, and contract domestic workers arrested while working outside their employers' homes face fines and two-year jail terms). The contract salary of an amah is approximately U.S. $386 a month, plus room and board—a sum that is said to be about three times that earned by a teacher in Manila. Approximately sixty-three thousand Filipinos work here now—more than ninety per cent of them on domestic-service contracts—and they recently overtook Americans as the Territory's largest expatriate community. Over the years, workers from various Philippine villages and barrios have staked out Sunday places in Central District, and there they sit, sprawl, or otherwise cluster until well into the evening.

ONCE their contracts expire, the Filipinos have two weeks to leave the Territory, and, unlike the Vietnamese, most seem to have every intention of going home. It will be interesting, in 1997, to see how long it takes Governor Wilson or his successor to clear out, leaving behind a secretariat—the Territory's eighteen principal administrative positions—which the government has committed to filling exclusively with Chinese nationals who are permanent residents of Hong Kong. The Governor, of course, can

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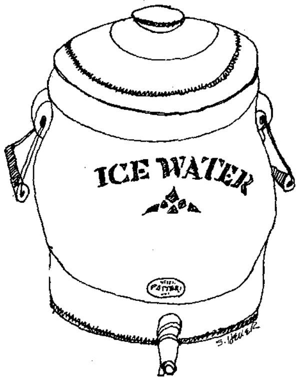
go home to Britain; he has the magic words "right of abode in the United Kingdom" printed in his passport. So, presumably, does Senior Executive Councillor Lydia Dunn, a Chinese businesswoman who last year took her seat in the House of Lords as a baroness. Most other Hong Kongers, however, were deprived of this right by the British Parliament in 1962, and recent public-opinion polls in Britain have shown sixty-five-per-cent opposition to giving it to them now. (Macanese have a right of abode in Portugal, so, paradoxically—thanks to the coming unification of Europe—when Macao reverts to China, in 1999, they will be able to fly to Portugal and, if they wish, change planes for England, where they will apparently be welcome to reside.) Last year, under diplomatic pressure, Britain did offer to accept fifty thousand "key" heads of households with links to the United Kingdom, but it has since been embarrassed by a marked lack of response to this so-called Nationality Selection Scheme. A million thirty-two-page forms were printed, and three hundred and fifty-six thousand were distributed, but despite extensive advertising only about sixty-four thousand were filed by the February 28th deadline. I've heard a number of explanations offered for this—China had cast doubt on whether it would honor such passports after 1997; most of the "key" people to whom the scheme was directed had already made arrangements to emigrate elsewhere; Britain is chilly, and life there is said to be boring—but probably it was simply a case of Hong Kongers' knowing where they weren't wanted. By contrast, Canada, which several years ago indicated a genuine interest in receiving skilled immigrants, issued twenty-two thousand visas to Hong Kongers in 1989 and twenty-eight thousand in 1990, and recently reported a three-year backlog of ninety thousand applications.



The emigration of Hong Kongers was officially estimated at sixty-two thousand last year, and although foreign passports are still more or less for sale, the price seems to be coming down. The nation of Tonga, for example, has cut its price from about thirty-five thousand American dollars to less than twelve thousand (however, the legality of Tonga passports is being challenged, even within that island kingdom); and Peru will be happy to provide a passport in exchange for a fifty-thousand-dollar five-year fixed deposit in its central bank. To judge from the diminishing numbers of "Will You Survive 1997?" advertisements by emigration-counselling services and diminishing attendance at the "Immigration Exhibitions" these services occasionally sponsor, Hong Kong's brain drain is slackening, and there may even be an undertow: the government now expects as many as thirty per cent of those who are leaving to return, foreign passports in hand, after they have completed residence requirements for citizenship abroad. The Hong Kong Labour Department says that seventy per cent of the applications submitted to its employment service for professionals are from Hong Kong emigrants seeking to come back, and a firm called Brain Gain (Hong Kong) has established offices in Toronto and Sydney. Any leftover jobs here will doubtless be filled with the help of international recruiters, who are seeking substantial numbers of *gweilo* executives and managers eager to come to what is becoming, in the words of Yojana Sharma, a *Daily Telegraph* correspondent, "a mecca for expatriate yuppies fleeing recession in the English-speaking world."

Emigrating corporations, too, may be coming back—if it can be truly said that any ever left. The first to appear to run was Jardine Matheson, which in 1841 was also the first *hong* to build a permanent building (an opium warehouse) here. In 1984, the year the agreement with China was signed, it reincorporated itself in Bermuda, and this year it announced an intention to move its primary stock-market listing to London, but it still holds about seventy per cent of its assets here, including five billion U.S. dollars' worth of office building and retail property in Central District. Another distinguished house to arrange an ostensible resettlement for itself abroad is the issuer of most of the Territory's currency—the Hongkong and Shanghai Banking Corporation. Although this hundred-and-twenty-six-year-old institution now styles itself on billboards, and in my passbook, as "Hongkong-Bank"—in government and financial circles it is referred to even more concisely, as "The Bank"—it nonetheless created a holding company for itself in London this year. Yet in 1985 The Bank moved into a steel-and-aluminum skyscraper, which it built in Central District at an announced cost of U.S. $640 million. (This figure does not include the finance charges, or the value of the land and furnishings—or, for that matter, the cost of installing electronic displays of hourly Hang Seng financial-index figures in the elevators—and the total amount has been estimated at U.S. $1 billion.)

Since 1984, sixty-one companies have moved their legal domiciles out of Hong Kong, but Hong Kong Trade Department officials say that last year alone the Territory achieved a net gain of ninety business ventures because of the influx of foreign companies. Many of the businesses coming here were recruited either by Hong Kong's Trade Development Council, which maintains thirty offices worldwide, or directly by the city's Trade Department. Recently, I called in at Central Government Offices to ask the Trade and Industry Secretary, John Chan, how he had managed to actually increase business investments in the Territory at a time when even The Bank was arranging an escape route. "In a way, The Bank helped us, by demonstrating the absolute freedom of movement of capital here," he told me. "Of course, The Bank isn't going anywhere—its assets, management, etc., will still be in Hong Kong—but it certainly made the point to investors that they will be able to repatriate their profits any time they like."

What if China changes the rules after 1997?

"Why should it?" Chan said. "China doesn't need another thousand square kilometres with six million more people living the way its own people do. If it makes Hong Kong just another part of China, what is that going to do for China? Which do you think they want in Beijing—an international center that is a major source of investment and managerial experience or just another city?"

Perhaps that is wishful thinking, but obviously the people who are investing in Hong Kong now are betting their money on the city's continued prosperity under China. People who are knowledgeable about real estate tell me that it takes at least seven years here to break even on a significant investment. Hong Kong has less time than that before 1997, yet this is not a dying city but a building one, difficult to walk around in because of all the construction scaffolds. An Italian-Korean joint venture is building a polystyrene plant at a cost of U.S. $100 million; the Japanese department-store group Yaohan is establishing its headquarters here and spending U.S. $500 million to open department stores and shopping centers; Motorola is building a plant in a high-technology industrial park. And the list goes on; nearly U.S. $250 million in new ventures has been announced in the past eighteen months. In one of the many books published recently about Hong Kong, Dick Wilson, the former editor of the *Far Eastern Economic Review*, concludes with a chapter entitled "Could the Tail Wag the Dog?" Probably not, but obviously there are those, here and in Beijing, who ponder the question.

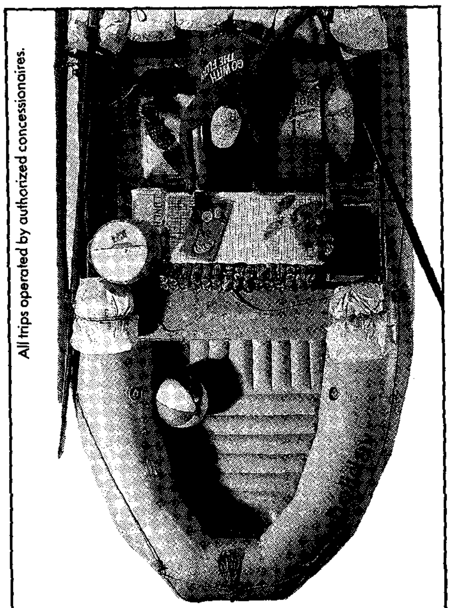
WHILE all this two-way traffic swirls about them, most Hong Kongers I've come in contact with seem, if not indifferent, at least stoic in their acceptance of what is going on and what is to come in six years. Governor Wilson looks to July 1, 1997, as the culmination of "a process unprecedented in terms of international history," but for most of the Territory's citizens the day the Union Jack comes down and the five-star red flag of the People's Republic is raised here will be just another *Li Bai Yi* (Tuesday).

The historic significance of the date itself is that it marks the termination of Britain's ninety-nine-year lease on the New Territories. Theoretically, British gunboats secured perpetual jurisdiction over Hong Kong Island and Kowloon; but, practically, these concessions have become indivisible from the "New Towns," farms, and islands that make up the New Territories. Rather than attempt to hold on to a truncated colony, Britain chose in the 1984 negotiations to secure for the entire Territory a half century of limited autonomy. Through 2047, Hong Kong will function capitalistically and separately, as a Special Administrative Region of China. The Chinese promised that *Gangren zhigang* ("Hong Kongers rule Hong Kong"), and that there will be "one country, two systems." "We practice our socialism, and you may practice your capitalism," Communist Party Secretary Jiang Zemin told a group of Hong Kong visitors in July, 1989, adding, "The well water does not interfere with the river water."

Also provided for in the 1984 negotiations was the establishment of a Joint Liaison Group to discuss "matters relating to the smooth transfer of power," and in 1984, at least, the handover seemed clear-cut: the authority of Britain would be in no way diminished until midnight, June 30, 1997, and in no way continued after that. However, problems have lately arisen over what the People's Republic calls "straddles." What about multiyear franchises, for example? Would the utility, communications, and transportation contracts negotiated by Britain before 1997 be acceptable to China afterward? The answer, reached after four days of discussions last year by the Joint Liaison Group, was, generally, yes. But now Hong Kong's continued growth—a goal to which both sides are pledged—is threatened by a straddle that was apparently unforeseen in 1984, and one that is so far proving intractable.

Visible across the harbor from the windows of my apartment, which is on the north shore of Hong Kong Island, is the runway of Kai Tak Airport, a platform of concrete jutting eight thousand feet east off Kowloon. The normal approach to this strip from the west, over Kowloon, puts jetliner passengers close enough to exchange waves with the high-floor occupants of a row of housing projects, and pilots I've talked to rate Kai Tak as among the most difficult landings in modern aviation. The problem, however, is not the runway but the fact that there is only one of it; last year, it bore the traffic of more than a hundred and five thousand takeoffs and landings. During peak periods, these now occur at two-minute intervals, and the din continues from six in the morning until midnight, when—presumably so Kowlooners can sleep—the airport is required to shut down.

Kai Tak, which was opened in 1925, has been there longer than the housing projects and almost all the other



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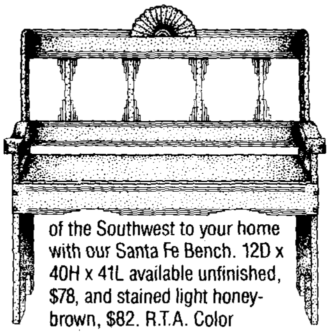

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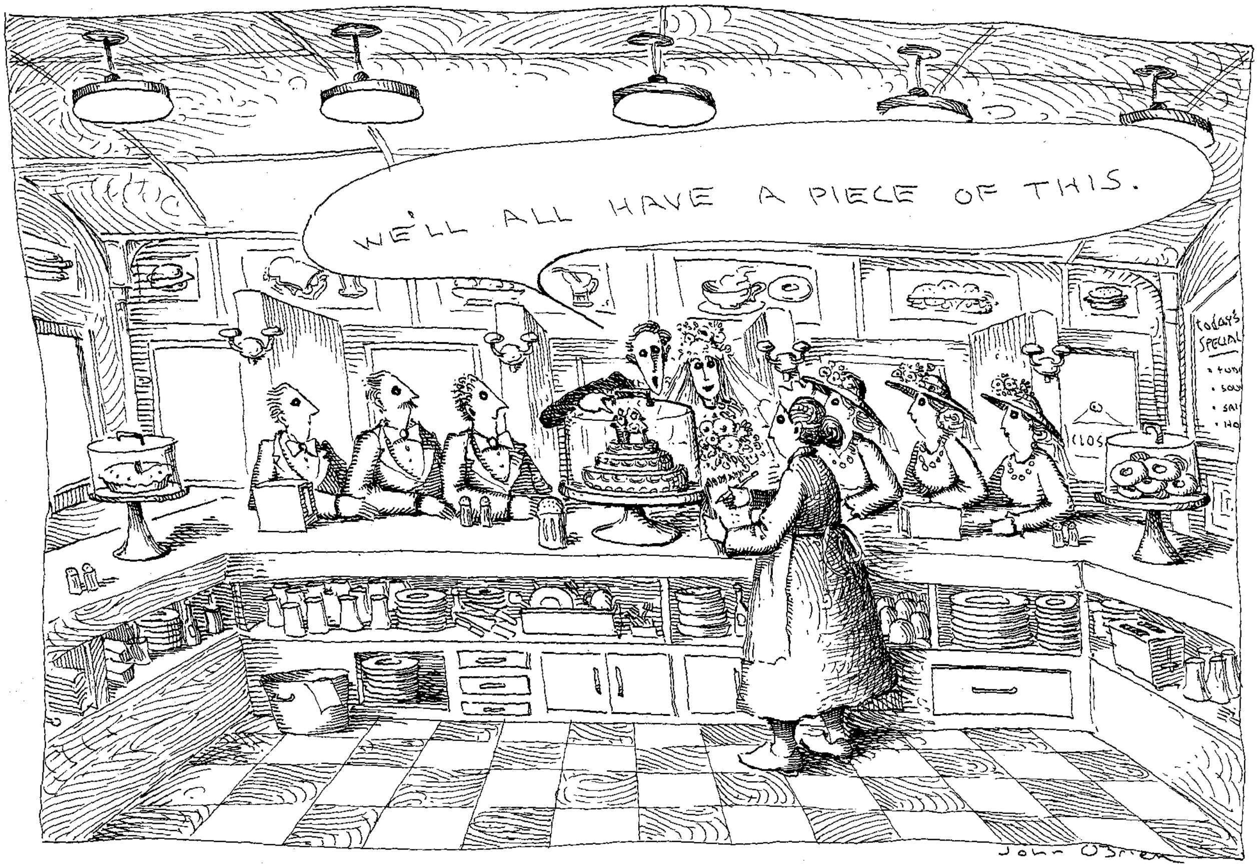
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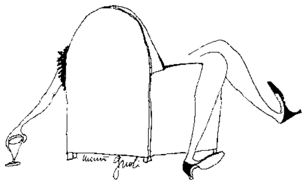
neighbors disturbed by its traffic. It was bombed by the Japanese on the same day as Pearl Harbor, reconstructed during the Second World War by the Japanese (using the labor of prisoners of war), bombed again, this time by Allied planes, and then reconstructed again, by the British, in 1956. They're still working on Kai Tak—the terminal is being rebuilt and extra airliner parking spaces are being created—but there seems no way of getting around the fact that the single runway, which served approximately eighteen and a half million airline passengers last year, will reach its absolute capacity by 1994 at the latest. In 1974, the Hong Kong government commissioned its first study on replacing Kai Tak; this was followed by several more studies, and ultimately by the Port and Airport Development Strategy, a proposal with the unfortunate acronym of PADS, which was put together in 1988 by consultants to the Territory's Land and Works Branch. On the basis of this document, Governor Wilson, in his opening address to the 1989-90 Legislative Council session, designated Chek Lap Kok, a sparsely inhabited, six-square-mile island about fifteen miles west of Victoria, as the site of a new airport.

The cost of levelling this island and building a double-runway airport and modern terminal facilities has been estimated at nearly U.S. $5 billion, and an even larger sum will be needed to link Chek Lap Kok by rail and road to the rest of Hong Kong. At a minimum, the plan requires filling in or bridging a narrow channel that separates Chek Lap Kok from the island of Lantau, building a New Town nearby for service workers, clearing road and rail rights-of-way over Lantau's undeveloped north shore, and constructing island-hopping bridges and a new harbor tunnel to the mainland, Hong Kong Island, and the Kowloon Peninsula. Piers, container-port facilities, dockyards, and typhoon shelters are also to be constructed along these rights-of-way. If the present plan holds up, this will be one of the most expensive public-works projects ever undertaken—exceeding by almost half again the cost of tunnelling beneath the English Channel. Its total minimum estimated cost is a hundred and twenty-seven billion Hong Kong dollars, or more than U.S. $16 billion, and these figures, which are in 1990 dollars, do not account for inflation over the ten years that the construction is expected to require—nor for the fact that the government often underestimates the cost of its public-works projects (having done so by more than twenty-five per cent for the past three years, according to a recent calculation in the Hong Kong *Standard*). From this enormous sum, only about U.S. $23 million—or slightly more than a tenth of one per cent of the lowest estimate—is budgeted as compensation for the hundred and ninety-four inhabitants of Chek Lap Kok and the much greater numbers of people in the New Territories who will be dispossessed by the project. Those who can prove family ownership of their properties before 1898, when Britain's ninety-nine-year lease on the New Territories took effect, will be paid for their land over and beyond "resettlement allowances"; the maximum such allowance under consideration is about U.S. $1700, but displaced residents will receive less than that if they choose to accept alternative apartment housing in the proposed New Town on Lantau.

GETTING to Chek Lap Kok from Victoria today is a more than two-hour trip: by ferry to Lantau; by bus across Lantau to the fishing village of Tung Chung, where the New Town is to be built; and then by *kai do*, or small ferry (which runs only two or three times a day), across the small stretch of estuary to Chek Lap Kok's western shore. On a January afternoon when I visited the island, only three of us—all sightseers—and no village residents disembarked there. As we jumped ashore (the *kai do* doesn't stop long enough to tie up), we were greeted by handmade banners strung over a pier and along a concrete footpath leading to a second pier, on the island's north shore, about two miles away. One banner, I was told, said "Residents Have Spent All Their Time Here Building Up Their Homes, and Now the Government Turns It Into Ashes," and another "Residents Threw Their Hearts and Blood Into Building Up Their Homes, and Now It Has Come to Nothing."

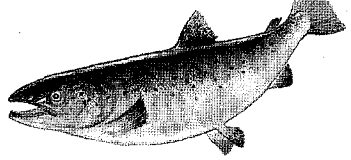
Beneath the banners, pasted onto structures and fence poles near the path, were printed notices in English. One warned, "This area will be cleared. . . . Residents are requested to coöperate with the staff of the Housing Department. . . . Any person who commences occupation . . . after the date of this notice"—no date was supplied—"will not be considered for rehousing or ex-gratia payment." It is arguably likely that the eventual "ex-gratia payment" will be sufficient to replace, and to some extent improve upon, most of Chek Lap Kok's one- or two-room concrete-block houses and their adjoining chicken coops and pigsties, if the residents are able to find enough land for them elsewhere in the Territory, but rural Cantonese say that it takes several decades for a family to find acceptance in a new community. The island's residents also face the problem of what to do about their ancestral tombs; another of the printed notices warned that "unclaimed graves will be removed by the government . . . without further notice."



The eviction deadline—April 1st—was almost three months away, but in fact it appeared from a casual walk about the island that many people had already left. Empty, perhaps abandoned, houses lined the concrete path, which is the village's principal street. On a nearby ridge stood a two-room concrete-block building that had been Chek Lap Kok's school; the building had been vandalized—and apparently recently. Several desks and chairs lying in the schoolyard bore no signs of rain damage, and there appeared to be fresh classwork inside—language and mathematics primers scattered around the classroom. In an adjoining office, correspondence between the school and the district education office and a teacher's application for employment littered the floor. The whole aspect of the vandalized building suggested that those who had abandoned it had expected to return; certainly they had not made any effort even to safeguard the school's files. Outside, on the wall facing the schoolyard, someone had painted the head of a young boy, with a tear running down his cheek. North of the school, barren and eroded hills that bore the signs of what I took to be jet-sluice mining rose from valleys dense with bamboo and vines and occasional banana trees. Pump houses that may have supported this activity were still intact on the island's western shore, but they, too, had been abandoned. When the island is levelled, the rocks that the miners left behind will be bulldozed into the sea as fill to support the concrete pad of the airport and its runways.

The path continued past the school in the direction of a small, century-old stone temple dedicated to Tin Hau, goddess of the sea, but first it passed a small store—a shanty, really—where we encountered, and bought beer from, the only family we met on Chek Lap Kok: an elderly man, his young wife, and their two pre-school-age sons. Mostly by gestures, the storekeeper informed us that he had been living on the island for forty years, and predicted that, despite the eviction deadline, the government would probably not get around to removing him for three years more.

While the Chek Lap Kok islanders will constitute only a small proportion of the dispossessed if the airport's links to the rest of Hong Kong are built on the scale now contemplated, the New Town in Tung Chung will displace hundreds of fishermen and farmers, and the road from there to the projected bridges cuts through a dozen more



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villages on Lantau. However, it is the prospective dispossession of a much more remote facility—across the harbor, on the easternmost point of the New Territories—that has recently made headlines. Yet another consultant's report on the PADS project is said to warn that the signal of a BBC relay station—a facility that opened only four years ago, to transmit to China, Korea, and Japan—will interfere dangerously with aircraft electronics at the new airport.

BUT most controversial of all is the enormous cost of the project. From the Xinhua building has come speculation that the Port and Airport Development Strategy appears to be Britain's last colonial stand, designed to empty Hong Kong's reserves for the benefit of Western and Japanese engineering corporations and leave for China only a bankrupt Special Administrative Region. "You host a banquet, and we foot the bill," Jiang Zemin complained, and *Wide Angle*, one of the more authoritative pro-Beijing publications here, reported that Deng Xiaoping himself had told Party leaders to "get tough" on Hong Kong issues and "to be vigilant against Britain's giving bad ideas and playing political tricks, thus leaving a big burden on the S.A.R. government." Hong Kong officials have said that the cost of the airport work will reduce the Territory's fiscal reserves—the amount of these reserves is secret, but one published estimate puts it at more than U.S. $9.3 billion—to U.S. $5.1 billion by 1995, and the Chinese are said to be demanding that the reserves be held above U.S. $6.4 billion. These funds, of course, are meant to serve a number of other purposes—most notably stabilizing Hong Kong's currency and underwriting its civil-service pensions. The Hong Kong government says that it expects to replenish the reserves by selling Kai Tak (which takes up two hundred and eighty hectares of extremely valuable Kowloon real estate), and other land reclaimed for the project, for around U.S. $5 billion, and it also intends to levy tolls of up to nearly four U.S. dollars on the roads to the airport and as yet unspecified fares on the rail link; presumably, it expects that the airport departure tax, which was just raised from U.S. $15 to U.S. $19 and is said to be the highest such tax in the world, will be raised again. But when it comes both to the scheduling of its expenses and to its ultimate revenue projections the Territorial government has been vague.

China has designated an "airport team" of negotiators, and three rounds of talks have been held so far. The reason for the talks is that about eighty per cent of the port and airport work will probably have to be financed with long-term bonds, and Hong Kong's debts might become incumbent on China after 1997. The People's Republic is being asked, in effect, to co-sign the loans—or, in the words of Governor Wilson, to give the project "a benevolent future." So far, however, all the benevolence that the Chinese leadership has been willing to manifest is a concurrence that Hong Kong needs a new airport. Beyond that, it has raised questions not only about the cost of the project but about its prospective site, scale, and administration. After all, one of the Chinese negotiators pointed out, the People's Republic is itself constructing an airport—at Shenzhen, across the Territory's border—for only U.S. $201 million. Last December, Lu Ping, the director of China's Hong Kong and Macao Affairs Office, charged that estimates for the PADS projects given privately to China's negotiators didn't appear to match those grudgingly released to the Hong Kong public. "I hope the government will tell the people the truth and be accountable to them," Lu told reporters who caught up with him in Guangzhou last December. "Don't conceal the truth. They should give a frank account to the people."

Coming as it does from a functionary of the People's Republic of China, which maintains an official Commission of Secrecy to make sure that its own internal workings are not disclosed, this seems to me to be an astonishing rebuke—but it appears warranted. "Many details are highly technical; the general citizen may not be able to understand," Anson Chan, the Hong Kong Secretary for Economic Services, declared bluntly last fall to an audience at Hongkong Baptist College, adding, "I don't think we will publicize the financial report." Those at work on the physical details of the project, including consultants, are under secrecy restraints, and the Provisional Airport Authority holds its meetings in private. However, one of its decisions has just leaked out: the levelling of Chek Lap

Kok will begin before the completion, next November, of an environmental-impact study.

The first "advanced works" airport contract, calling for the excavation of four million cubic metres of the island, site formation, and the construction of office facilities, was awarded in January to a Hong Kong subsidiary of a Japanese engineering corporation; more contracts are about to be awarded, and the results appear to have already shown up in the coming fiscal year's budget, of U.S. $9.5 billion—up eleven per cent from an estimate made last year. The Territory's finance Branch estimates that about U.S. $2.7 billion of this will be set aside for the Capital Works Reserve Fund, in part to pay for PADS projects. Expenditures for such items as medical and social welfare and public education will, not surprisingly, increase much less than the Territory's current eleven-per-cent rate of inflation, but a more substantial loser—at least, according to the preliminary projections—is the environment. Hong Kong's Environmental Protection Department will receive an increase of only 2.6 per cent, and although the spending on environmental capital-works projects will grow by seventy per cent—to about U.S. $334 million—Linda Siddall, the founder and recently retired director of the Friends of the Earth organization here, told me that she suspects that these funds will be "draining out" in the direction of PADS. "Instead of doing the work on sewage disposal that needs to be done in Victoria, Kowloon, and around the New Towns, they will be doing work out in Lantau, for the airport," she told me. "The result could be that they'll have a spanking-new airport that nobody will come to, because tourists don't want to come to a place with sewage-laden water. Businesses are also beginning to have a problem getting executives to come here. If their kids can't swim because of pollution, our beaches aren't much of an asset."

Her point seems well taken—even if I never heard of anyone coming to Hong Kong for the swimming—and now Hong Kong's business community is becoming concerned that pollution, much of it created by businesses, may become as big an obstacle to the city's growth as Kai Tak's single runway. In June of 1989, the government published a white paper in which it prom-

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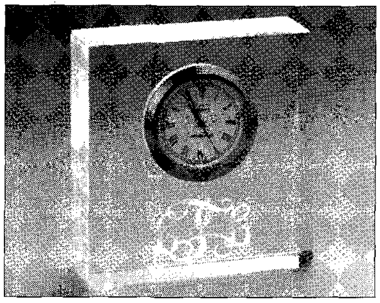

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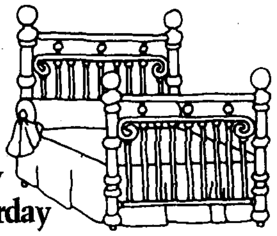

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ised to spend more than U.S. $2.5 billion on anti-pollution efforts in Hong Kong; since then, Governor Wilson has been asking us, as the *South China Morning Post* noted recently, "to judge the administration not by what it says but by what it does, in one speech after another." The Environmental Protection Department has accumulated a staff of eight hundred and fifty, with eighty-two more positions provided for in the next budget, and has published several assessments of what needs to be done, but it so far appears hesitant to impose controls that the Territory's businesses might find costly. It has taken steps to clean up Tolo, a New Territories harbor so polluted that its bottom consists of sewage sludge, and it did shut down one of several dye works in the New Territories which for twenty years have been contributing to the foul reputation of the so-called Black River. There are, however, thirteen thousand factories here with less visible discharges than that particular dye works (which has announced plans to move on to Indonesia), and Ms. Siddall maintains that the first water-control regulations for Tolo Harbor will allow a thirty-per-cent increase in some of the pollutants. Although the E.P.D. recently required gas stations to begin selling unleaded gasoline, it has not banned the sale of leaded fuel. Nor has it yet decided the semantic issues involved in calibrating Hong Kong's air as good, intermediate, or poor quality, and says it will not be able to formulate an air-quality index until next year, at the earliest.

Yet many here find it encouraging that Hong Kongers, long considered oblivious of their environment, are beginning to take action themselves. Nine years after the founding of Friends of the Earth, Hong Kong, there are two Cantonese-speaking and three English-speaking environmental-action citizens' organizations both competing and coöperating with it. According to Ms. Siddall, half of the local F.O.E.'s two thousand members are Chinese, and many of the requests its staff receives for help in establishing environmental programs are from Chinese Hong Kong organizations. "I think a solid environmental awareness will be in place here soon," she told me. "It hasn't happened yet, but it's beginning." Another surprising (to me) initiative has come from Hong Kong's businessmen; in 1988, thirteen companies, including China Light & Power and the notable *hongs* of Swire and Jardine Pacific, formed a Private Sector Committee on the Environment, now chaired by The Bank, which also furnishes an office on the seventeenth floor of its new building. When I asked the committee's coördinator, Humphrey Keenlyside, how an environmental organization came to be founded by business interests, he said, "I don't see it as contradictory at all. There are plenty of approaches that are good for both business and the environment." He told me that the committee has been looking into "small-scale" efforts to encourage industries to install anti-pollution equipment. "We might lease a few devices ourselves and lend them to factories as demonstration projects," he said. "We're trying to convince industries that they don't have to spend a fortune, and that not polluting can make good economic sense."

However, small-scale efforts don't appear to make much of an impact in Hong Kong. The committee's initial programs were aimed at clearing the harbor of refuse, but Marine Department barges and commissioned sampans still skim from its surface about twenty tons of floating garbage every day, and flotsam still collects around many of the piers and around the shore promenade from which I watched the New Year's fireworks. For the moment, though, neither its daunting air- and water-pollution problems nor threats from Beijing nor the Chek Lap Kok controversy nor the emigration of many talented and wealthy residents appears to be depressing this contrarily cheerful city. So, *Kung Hei Fat Choy*—or, if you prefer the Mandarin, *Gongxi Facai:* May you grow rich and prosperous in this Year of the Sheep, or the Goat, or the Ram, in the Chinese calendar year of 4689, which in Hong Kong is also 6 B.C. (Before China).

—FRED C. SHAPIRO

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BOOKS

School Days

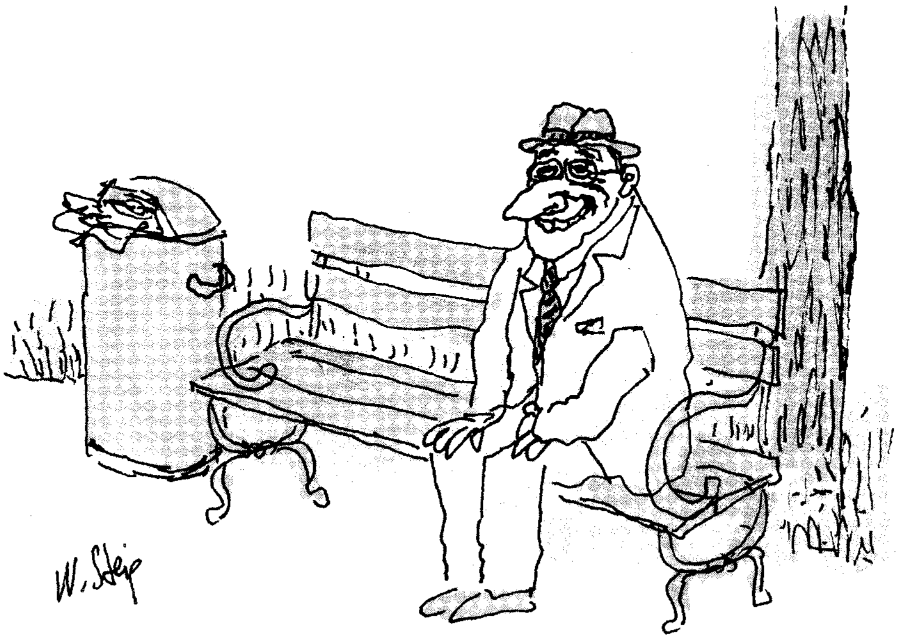
“WHEN there is nothing whatever to say,” the London *Times* once wrote of a play by A. A. Milne, “no one knows better than Mr Milne how to say it.” For much of the nineteen-twenties, this talent for cleverness and whimsy—for writing of a sort that was invariably described as “gossamer-thin” and “light as thistledown”—made Milne one of the best-known and most successful dramatists on either side of the Atlantic. At one point, he had five productions running simultaneously, and the Chicago *Tribune* said of his “Mr. Pim Passes By” that it was better than Shaw’s “Heartbreak House.” With his royalties, Milne bought a house in Chelsea, a farm in Sussex, and a fancy motorcar. He was the model of the young, fashionable literary clubman. Hugh Walpole and Somerset Maugham sponsored him for the Garrick, and among his other friends were Harold Laski, Charlie Chaplin, and J. M. Barrie. Yet by 1930 Milne’s career as a playwright was essentially over, and by the end of his life, in 1956, he was known, as he is today, almost solely for his children’s books—books that had earned him a fortune but about which he came to feel profoundly ambivalent. In this country, Milne’s name has so faded that in bringing out Ann Thwaite’s new biography of him, “A. A. Milne” (Random House; $29.95), the publisher has felt obliged to add an explanatory subtitle, “The Man Behind Winnie-the-Pooh.”

Mrs. Thwaite’s is a big book for so apparently small a subject, and it has a slightly Edwardian, overstuffed quality. It includes not only Milne’s first letter home (“My dear Mama, We went to Hamstid Heft yestoday. We had a sanambil. We had piggy-backs. I want sme tools ples Mama”) but also his upper-school examination papers (“What do you know of the Mutilation of the Hermae, the Gerousia, the Olympic Games, the Helots, Ostracism?”) and his cricket scores (no runs against Charterhouse in 1899, but thirty-eight against the Town: “a very plucky innings”); and, in shepherding the reader along, the author doesn’t hesitate to digress, to repeat, to foreshadow, and to lecture. Here she is, for example, firmly closing the door on the possibility of bathroom connotations in the name Pooh: “This association—supposedly from the exclamation at anything smelly or disgusting—did not come into the language until the 1930s (according to Eric Partridge) and whether it has anything to do with Pooh Bear it is impossible to say. There is nothing smelly or disgusting about Pooh.”

Mrs. Thwaite has also written lives of Edmund Gosse and Frances Hodgson Burnett, and you can sometimes hear in her prose the plummy, throat-clearing tones of old-fashioned literary homily. In this book, as in the others, they are not inappropriate. Milne was himself a kind of throwback—an Edwardian who never really adjusted to the modern world—and Mrs. Thwaite brings to his story an instinctive perceptiveness and understanding. She makes Milne not likable, exactly—he was too self-absorbed—but sympathetic; and she makes of his story not quite a tragedy but a sad and engrossing study in the fleetingness of literary fame and success and in the complicated, sometimes damaging interactions of life and art.

Alan Alexander Milne was born in 1882, into one of those dysfunctional English families which have so often been the stuff of fiction, from Samuel Butler to Ivy Compton-Burnett. His father was a schoolmaster of an unusually progressive sort (except when it came to his own children); he believed in affection rather than discipline, and had the foresight to engage as a science and drawing master an underqualified but free-spirited young man named H. G. Wells. Milne’s mother was invisible, or the next thing to it. “I don’t think I ever really knew her,” he wrote later, adding, “I neither experienced, nor felt the need of, that mother-love of which one reads so much and over which I am supposed (so mistakenly) to have sentimentalized.” Milne had two older brothers. Barry—“the wicked Barry,” Milne called him—was born in 1879 and was the black sheep; he grew up to be an adulterer and a spendthrift, and after he defrauded his and Alan’s nieces of an inheritance Alan never spoke to him again, not even when Barry, dying of throat cancer, wrote and begged for a reconciliation. Kenneth, born in 1880, was a sweeter, more generous, and slightly less talented version of Alan. The two were extremely close, and when Alan, who was sixteen months younger, began to surpass Ken at school and at sports Ken bore it with grace—bore it better, Milne later said, than he ever would have.

It was Ken who first began to com-



Interior Monologue

pose light verse, and to have notions of becoming an author, but when Alan began to write, Ken yielded there, as well. "Whatever I did, you did a little better or a little sooner," he said in a letter to Milne. "Even after all this, I could still tell myself that I had one thing left. I should always be the writer of the family. And now you have taken that too. Well, damn you, I suppose I must forgive you." Ken entered the Civil Service, and rose to become Assistant Secretary of Pensions; he died, of tuberculosis, when he was just forty-eight.

For a while, everything came easily to Alan Milne. He did well in school and won a maths scholarship to Cambridge, arriving there in 1900, not long before the editorship of *Granta* (then an undergraduate humor magazine) fell vacant. Milne took over, and made such a success of the magazine—largely on the strength of his own contributions—that he was invited to contribute to *Punch*, at that time perhaps in the heyday of its popularity and influence. Milne's sketches and poems were so well received there that in 1906, at age twenty-four, he became the assistant editor, and in just a few years his weekly writings made him almost a household word—the Robert Benchley or the Alexander Woollcott of his time. (He was, incidentally, the inventor of that literary subgenre which turns up even now at the bottom of certain pages of this magazine: the funny or inane passage culled from a newspaper or other publication, together with a deflating tag line or heading. Milne ran a weekly column of such "howlers," as he called them, and Winston Churchill, then a young Cabinet minister, was one of the many readers who sent in likely material.)

Had the First World War not intervened, Milne would probably have become editor-in-chief of *Punch*, but in 1915 he volunteered, and was given a commission in the Royal Warwickshire Regiment. He spent part of the war on sick leave—he had caught trench fever in France—and in his spare time he tried his hand at playwriting; after the Armistice, when an opening at *Punch* failed to materialize, he turned all his energies to the theatre, and again was almost instantly successful. By 1922, Milne was making from his plays more money in a week than most people in England earned in a year. He had, as he said, the "knack."

Writing was for Milne a matter of puzzle solving more than of creativity. Like so many precocious schoolboys of his generation (Wodehouse and Saki, for example), he had a naturally graceful and colloquial prose style—the product, one suspects, not so much of years of swotting Horace and Xenophon as of hours stolen under the covers with *Cricket Annual* and *Nash's Magazine*—and to this he added an almost scientific mastery of form (the mechanics of blank verse, for instance, and of the second-act curtain) and, of course, his genius for finding a lot to say about nothing. He could almost effortlessly spin out an amusing page or two about, say, a fellow dropping his dressing case in a railway carriage and spilling his dirty socks and collars, or a couple of diverting acts about a chap who for fifty thousand pounds changes his name to Wurzel-Flummery. If most of Milne's work was fluff and gossamer, it was *well-made* fluff and gossamer, and that seems to have been part of its appeal.

Mrs. Thwaite is particularly good on England in the years immediately preceding and following the First World War, and on the popular culture that made Milne possible. It was a culture that took lightness seriously—a culture in which *Punch* was almost a civic institution, and in which light verse, that most ephemeral of forms, was regarded with something approaching solemnity. (What initially drew Milne and his wife to each other was their passion for the verse writer C. S. Calverley.) Thwaite is also instructive on the theatrical world of this period—a world presided over by man-about-town playwrights like Pinero and Barrie, and by fashionable performers like Lillah McCarthy and Leslie Howard—and she suggests that there was more intersection than one might think between the life presented on the stage and the life off it. Playgoing was itself a form of theatre, a way for the audience to see and be seen, and the rarefied, do-nothing world of the drawing-room comedy—with its fancy-dress balls and shooting parties and country-house weekends—was only a slightly exaggerated version of the world that Milne increasingly came to feel at home in. But eventually, of course, that world disappeared. The drawing-room comedy went out of fashion, as the movies began to replace the theatre, and popular taste grew more serious; and Milne never really adjusted. He went on writing the same kind of play, to worse and worse reviews, and finally, with surprisingly bad grace, he took to publicly blaming the critics for his failures.

That Milne had nothing to say was only part of the problem; his playwriting also suffered from a near-fatal kind of priggishness and earnestness, which ruled out farce, for example, and kept him from going very deeply into sexual comedy. And he had a proselytizing streak—perhaps the oddest yet also the most endearing thing about him. One would expect someone in Milne's position to be a Tory, an Anglican, and a supporter of His Majesty's Forces, but in fact he was a Liberal (until 1945, anyway), an agnostic, and a pacifist. He wrote a pamphlet describing his secular humanism, published a famous and influential antiwar tract, and fired off letters to the *Times* on subjects like the League of Nations and the proper salary for infantrymen. By the end of his life, very few traces of the humorist were left: Milne had become something of a crank.

IN the summer of 1923, Milne began idly writing poems for children—partly to distract himself from a detective novel he was supposed to be working on—and quickly found himself with a book's worth. "When We Were Very Young" came out a year later, and was an overnight success; among its earliest admirers in this country, according to Milne's publishers, were thirty-eight governors and three members of the Supreme Court. It may be hard for anyone not of the pre-TV era to understand just how indelibly these singsong verses imprinted themselves on generations of children and adults both here and in England; they were part of the basic mental furniture of the middle class. And even today ineradicable snatches from "When We Were Very Young" and its 1927 successor, "Now We Are Six," echo, like static, inside many otherwise grownup heads: "They're changing guard at Buckingham Palace . . . James James Morrison Morrison Weatherby George Dupree . . . I do like a little bit of butter to my bread. . . ." The first Winnie-the-Pooh story was written in

December, 1925, and by the following March there were six more. The book "Winnie-the-Pooh" was published in October, 1926, and eventually became an even bigger hit than the poems. In just a few years, these children's books had sold hundreds of thousands of copies each.

Mrs. Thwaite is—inevitably, perhaps—a champion of Milne's writing for children, and of the two Pooh books in particular ("The House at Pooh Corner" came out in 1928); I must confess that my own sentiments are closer to those of Dorothy Parker, who wrote once that Pooh made her "fwow up." Or, rather, I should say that this is the effect that Milne's relentless whimsy has on me now; both as a child and as a parent of young children, I found the books indispensable. The appeal for me (as for many people) lay as much in the pictures as in the text, however, and I suspect that the fate of the Pooh stories might have been very different had they not been accompanied by E. H. Shepard's elegant and unwhimsical illustrations. These were drawn more or less from life, as it happens. Most of the animals, as everyone knows, were modelled on actual nursery toys, but the Forest turns out to have been based on the landscape around Milne's country house in Sussex, and Milne's son, Christopher, was the model—button nose, pageboy haircut, and all—for the moppet Christopher Robin.

In any event, there is no disputing the enduring popularity of the Pooh books. They are among the handful of essential "children's classics," and remarkable in that, perhaps alone of such books, they portray a world that is absolutely benign, with none of the undercurrents of anarchy or evil—or of death—that are the real subject of most great writing for children. Mrs. Thwaite cites, with implicit approval, theories that the world of the Pooh books represents a kind of idealized family, or even a lost paradise, but the true analogue, it seems to me, is some very indifferent boarding school, where the boys are always hungry (they live on acorns and honey, mostly) and the plumbing is bad (all that worrying about floods). Christopher Robin is head boy, of course; Owl is class scholar; Roo is the new boy who gets picked on; and Pooh is the not very bright fat lad who's a jolly good sort nonetheless. (Kanga, so often perceived as a mother figure, was in fact a male until Milne's misapprehension of marsupial anatomy was pointed out to him, and he had to make last-minute corrections on the manuscript; in the first edition, there remains a telltale "his.")

Milne never exactly repudiated the children's books, but as they claimed a larger and larger share of his reputation he often talked about wishing to escape them. The books also became, in part, the occasion of a disastrous split between Milne and his son. The story of Milne and Christopher is Thwaite's second big theme, and it is a thoroughly sad one—rooted in stubbornness and misunderstanding, in stinted emotion and affection unexpressed.

Milne and his wife, Dorothy—or Daphne, as she preferred to be known—were almost comically ill-suited to be parents. She was a monstrously vain and shallow woman, interested in little besides gardening and interior decoration and, oddly, the left-wing American playwright Elmer Rice, with whom she had an affair. She left most

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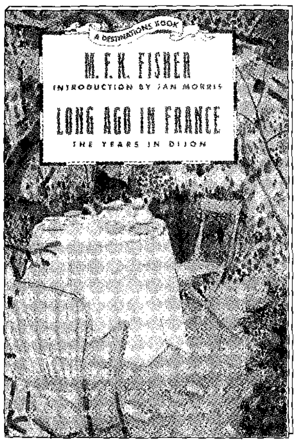

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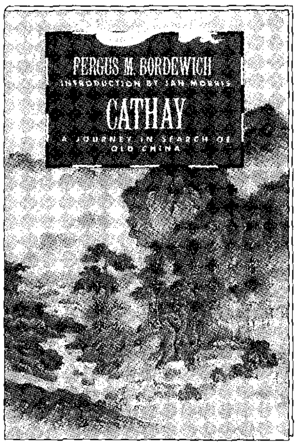

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of Christopher's rearing to a nanny, and once he was away at school she almost never went to see him. It was as if he had ceased to exist. Milne, like most men of his generation, was uncomfortable with small children, and was afflicted, besides, with a certain iciness of temperament. "My father's heart remained buttoned up all through his life," Christopher wrote in a memoir, "The Enchanted Places," speculating that it was precisely because Milne could not relate to his son that he wrote about him. The Pooh stories, it turns out, were strictly public productions; the stories that Milne told Christopher were long and *deliberately boring*—*primarily* intended to induce sleep.

Christopher's relationship with his father improved dramatically when he grew old enough to share Milne's passion for games. They played cricket in a meadow behind the house; they went golfing together, and practiced putting on a green Milne had built in the front garden; and every night they worked through the *Times* crossword. They also studied Morse code, and sent messages to each other with hand squeezes while riding to and from the country in the back of a chauffeur-driven car. In effect, they went through boyhood together.

Perhaps Milne's happiest moments were during the seaside holidays he took in the thirties with Christopher and Ken's widow and children. Thwaite's description of these outings (which "Daphne" attended only once) is both poignant and funny, evoking a kind of Arthur Ransome summer camp, with swimming, tennis, boating, and also parlor games, stone-throwing, and a Pooh-like contest that consisted of trying to guess who would come over the hill next. The campers called themselves the Owls, and Milne wrote a song for them:

Look for the rainbow in the sky!
Look for the kidney in the pie!
Look for the ointment round the fly!
Rally, Owls! Rally!

Milne's letters of this period are filled with proud references to Christopher—or Moon, as he was known then. (The whole family had a penchant for schoolboy nicknames; Milne was called Blue, for the color of his eyes.) He talks about Christopher's success at school, his companionability, his prowess as a cricketer (and the possibility that he might become a professional). In actuality, Christopher was a good but not outstanding student, a mediocre cricket player, and so self-conscious (the result, no doubt, of having spent part of his childhood in public, as Christopher Robin) that he both trembled and stammered. When, in 1940, he volunteered for the Army, the examiners almost rejected him as a defective.

Christopher Milne spent much of the Second World War in Italy and the Middle East, and gradually grew apart from his parents; things got worse after the war, when he married the daughter of his mother's brother Aubrey, to whom she had not spoken for twenty-five years. Christopher and his wife eventually moved to Devon—far from the senior Milnes—and Christopher had little to do with or to say about his father until, in late 1952, when Milne was bedridden from a stroke, he gave a bitter interview to the *Sunday Dispatch*, declaring, among other things, that his mother had provided most of the material for the Pooh stories, and that "ever since I was quite a small boy, I have hated being Christopher Robin."

Milne died three years later, and Mrs. Thwaite concludes her account of the funeral—a horrible and embarrassing affair, at which one of Milne's *Punch* colleagues read the "Suffer the little children" verse from St. Mark, and the crooner Norman Shelley sang Pooh's song "How Sweet to Be a Cloud"—with these chilling sentences:

> Christopher's wife Lesley did not come up for the service; she had the excuse that she was six months pregnant. Christopher himself dismayed his mother by turning up in an elderly overcoat. He never saw her again, although Daphne lived for another fifteen years.

Actually, Christopher did see his mother once more, though it's not clear why. He disclaimed any interest in the estate, and for years refused to touch a penny of his father's royalties, changing his mind only when he needed money to pay for a disabled daughter's medical bills.

What went wrong? Thwaite prefers to let the facts speak for themselves, and Christopher—in a second book of memoirs, "The Path Through the Trees"—says only, "Children drift away from their parents as they grow up, and it is right that they should. I had been very close to mine, especially to my father, for rather longer than is usual, and so the drifting when it came was perhaps a little farther than is usual." The truth, I think, is simply that Christopher grew up, and that nothing in his upbringing had prepared him for adulthood and for making a living. He tried for a while to become a writer himself—and was both resentful that his father didn't help more and humiliated that he couldn't succeed on his own—and failed miserably at a department-store career before finally becoming a bookseller and picture framer. And he never got over his feeling that a portion of his childhood had been exploited—indeed, had been stolen from him.

Milne, for his part, seems not to have understood how to get along with a son who was no longer a boy. All he knew was how to play with him. Like Wodehouse, whom he so much resembles—and who was, in fact, a close friend until Milne broke with him over Wodehouse's allegedly treasonous broadcasts during the Second World War—Milne had one of those peculiarly arrested English sensibilities, locked somewhere in a kind of eternal fifth form: the realm of Stalky and Tom Brown, where what mattered most was pluck and sportsmanship and good clean fun. Milne's tastes all his life remained those of a schoolboy. He seldom listened to music, and had no interest in art. His favorite author was Kenneth Grahame; his favorite book was "The Wind in the Willows," and he judged other people according to whether they liked it, too. His favorite meal was ham and eggs and ginger beer—boarding-school food.

What is so unfortunate is that Milne's boyishness didn't make him happier—he was unable to hold on to innocence the way Wodehouse did, for example, and was for much of his life a *glum* schoolboy—and that he couldn't put it to better use in his work. Instead of Wodehouse's larksome high spirits and love of nonsense, there is in Milne a kind of forced brightness and dutiful cleverness, and the difference is nowhere more apparent than in their respective *alter egos:* Bertie Wooster, the scapegrace Old Etonian, and Christopher Robin, the overachieving graduate of that dubiously accredited school in the woods. Milne never tells us what became of Christopher Robin, of course, but there is a clue at the end of "The House at Pooh Corner," when Christopher Robin takes Pooh up to Galleons Lap and says, "I'm not going to do Nothing any more. . . .They don't let you." What he means is that he's off to public school, after which loom the crammer's and a job at the Ministry of Pensions.

—Charles McGrath

BRIEFLY NOTED

FICTION

The Miracle Game, by Josef Skvorecky, translated from the Czech by Paul Wilson (Knopf; $22.95). "Americans are obsessed with cancer," Daniel Smiricky remarks on a visit here, "because they haven't got much else to be afraid of." As a determined survivor of Nazi and Soviet control in his native Czechoslovakia, Smiricky is so aware of the dangers lurking in any kind of commitment or belief that he devotes himself to the casual pursuit of sexy beauties and the writing of inoffensive if ridiculous operettas with titles like "Eva, Have You Read Robbe-Grillet?" Nevertheless, in 1948, while pursuing a vixen called Vixi, he is present at what is regarded as a miracle by religious believers and a hoax by political ones —the bowing of a saint's statuette in a country church—and which eventually results in a state-induced death or two. Just as the Soviet chess champion and his Czech counterpart are unwittingly pitted against each other by the ever-conniving Vixi, the myriad lovers, betrayers, patriots, and investigators brilliantly orchestrated here get involved in a game far more difficult than even the most cynical of them can appreciate. It takes over twenty years to play out, and every move is an ironic commentary on every other.

A Vocation and a Voice, by Kate Chopin, edited and with an introduction by Emily Toth (Penguin; $6.95). Twenty-three stories and sketches—some lurid, some light-hearted, all astir with that curious blend of directness and fancy which characterizes Chopin's prose. Many appeared in such popular publications as *Vogue* and the St. Louis *Criterion* during the eighteen-nineties. Fans of "The Awakening," that once scandalous proto-feminist novel, will not be surprised to find all manner of independent women here, from a consumptive postmistress who writes short fiction to an aging godmother who breaks the law. But the long title piece details the sexual and spiritual "awakening" of a young man, and Chopin's attention to the relationship between sensuality and religiosity (Catholic, that is) is as apparent in this volume as her worldly view of romance and the predicament of women. Ms. Toth's overenthusiastic scholarly notes tell us everything from the origin of the word "Cajun" to the precise significance of an ex-convent girl smoking a cigarette, but we can thank her for giving us the pleasure of reading these tales together, as the author meant them to be read.

Citadel in Spring, by Hiroyuki Agawa, translated from the Japanese by Lawrence Rogers (Kodansha; $18.95). Originally published in 1949, this autobiographical novel of wartime Japan is a surprising historical document as well as a moving account of the cost of militarism and defeat. Like the author, the protagonist, Koji Obata, is a native of Hiroshima. Koji is a university student in Tokyo, and in the mobilization following Pearl Harbor he is forced to graduate early, and is drafted into the Imperial Navy. The book includes fascinating descriptions of the code-breaking efforts of Japanese intelligence, a vivid naval battle, and an unflinching chapter on the atomic bombing of Hiroshima, but these set pieces are accompanied by more modest scenes, written with a casual realism, that follow Koji's friendships and family relations. The scenes cumulatively show that, despite an official veneer of propaganda extolling vigor and resolve, life in a culture based on total war inflicts on its youth a corrupting boredom, stifles and twists idealism, and nourishes private obsessions. Among its other merits, the novel serves as an engrossing corrective to many of our dim and caricatured images of the Japanese experience in the Second World War.

Two Girls, Fat and Thin, by Mary Gaitskill (Poseidon; $18.95). At first, this novel's intention seems inspired: to lampoon the cult of Ayn Rand while also attempting to grasp

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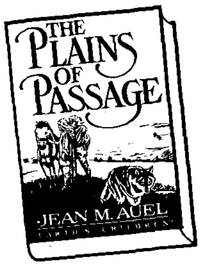

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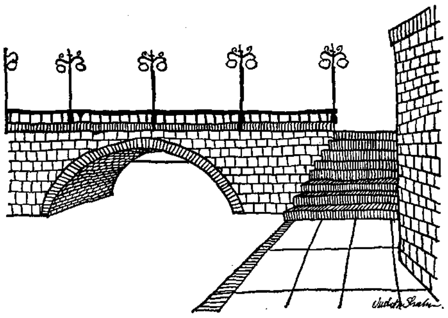
the attraction of her philosophy. Skinny Justine Shade, a friendless young free-lance writer, is working on a piece about Anna Granite and the Definitist Movement for a hip downtown magazine. Her investigations soon lead to a queasy encounter with the enormous Dorothy Never, a loyal former secretary to Granite who now works the graveyard shift as a legal proofreader and spends her days holed up in her Queens apartment. These two women, with their tragicomic borderline lives, provide a satisfying counterpoint to Granite's rigid and humorless mythology; unfortunately, they are abruptly abandoned in the present, while the reader is given lengthy case histories of their grim suburban upbringings, both of which were warped by loneliness and sexual abuse. As in her impressive collection of stories, "Bad Behavior," Ms. Gaitskill explores the unnerving territory of female masochism, but the result here is more stupefying than revelatory. Her huge chunks of "background" have a deadening effect on the reader as well as on the women themselves—one pushes through the novel in order to deliver its heroines back to the present, where their struggle to survive regains an absurd yet oddly noble dimension.

GENERAL

Learning to Look: My Life in Art, by John Pope-Hennessy (Doubleday; $27.50). "Objects mean more to me than people," John Pope-Hennessy informs us, quite unnecessarily. The eminent British art historian has chosen to write his autobiography as a dossier of his encounters with works of art and art museums, and the result is a disappointingly dry chronicle. Unlike his contemporary and colleague Kenneth Clark, who wrote a beguiling autobiography and went on to enchant millions with his "Civilisation" series on television, Pope-Hennessy has hewed to the narrower demands of his field, which is Italian Renaissance painting and sculpture. His distinguished record as the director of two great museums (the Victoria and Albert and the British Museum) and, from 1977 to 1986, as consultative chairman of the Department of European Paintings at the Metropolitan seems hardly to have interfered with his scholarship, which has brought forth twenty books and helped to shape the thinking of several generations of students. A hint of the intellectual steel that made all this possible slips through the meticulous prose now and then—for example, in occasional references to the admirable "ruthlessness" of certain fellow art historians (Clark's main flaw, he writes, was "a lack of ruthlessness")—but what's missing is a sense of how, and perhaps why, the author learned to prefer objects to people. One surprise is that this famously acerbic Briton likes American students better than their British counterparts, and that his ten years at the Metropolitan were among "the happiest and most constructive years that I had ever known."

The Promised Land: The Great Black Migration and How It Changed America, by Nicholas Lemann (Knopf; $24.95). The road to the hellish conditions of America's ghettos was paved with good and bad intentions and littered with unintended consequences. Mr. Lemann begins in the South in the early part of this century, and follows a few black migrants from Clarksdale, Mississippi, who moved to Chicago at mid-century, where they found a vibrant black community, some political rights, and jobs that could pay almost as much in an hour as could be earned in a day of picking cotton. But the industrial jobs that had drawn blacks north began to disappear, while housing construction failed to keep pace with demand. Lyndon Johnson wanted his Great Society to address the resulting urban crisis, but, eager to impress the intellectuals who scorned him, he abandoned his inclination toward New Deal-style education and public-works programs, and acquiesced in the hastily improvised community-action programs favored by the likes of the Ford Foundation (but never intended to be implemented on such a large scale). The Great Society initiatives did help many black Americans, but not the ghetto poor they were designed for. Instead, they provided government jobs for members of the black middle class, who then moved out of the ghettos. With their departure, the stable communities that had greeted migrants in the forties became desolate, drug-ridden, and crime-choked. Mr. Lemann has given us a riveting account of one of the defining episodes of twentieth-century America.



Into the Great Solitude: An Arctic Journey, by Robert Perkins (Holt; $19.95). Some years ago, Mr. Perkins, a young Boston outdoorsman, came across a copy of a journal kept by one Captain George Back, of the Royal Navy, called "Narrative of the Arctic Land Expedition to the Mouth of the Great Fish River, 1833, 1834, 1835." He determined to retrace Back's journey, down what is now the Back River, from near Yellowknife, in the Northwest Territories, to the Arctic Ocean. In 1987, he did so, alone, in a custom-made canoe, with a supply of Cream of Wheat, raisins, and coffee; a .22 rifle; some fishing equipment; and a kalimba. His account is a splendid association of autobiographical reverie, regional history, acute observation, and unrelenting but plainly stated adventure involving endless rapids, good and awful weather, wolves, bears, and musk-oxen. He muses on the long-departed Inuits, destroyed by "needles, fishing line, hooks, and steel knives." He notes how a loon in flight "carries its feet, touching as hands do in prayer." And at the end he looks at "the river, the loons, the rocks, the wind, the wolves, the fish, the birds—even the black flies" and seems to hear them say, "If you love us—really love us—don't come back."

Note: "Once More Around the Park: A Baseball Reader," by Roger Angell, has been published by Ballantine ($18.95). Nearly all the contents first appeared in *The New Yorker.*

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